

THE FABLES OF ESOP, IN ENGLISH.

*With all his life and fortune, how hee was
Subtill, Wise, and born in Greece, not far from
Troy the great, in a Towne named Amonio. He was
of all other men most deformed, and evill shapen : for he
had a great Head, a larg Visage, long Iawes, sharp Eyes, a short
Necke, crooke-backed, great Belly, great Legs, larg Feet. And
yet that which was worle he was dumb, and could not speake
But notwithstanding this, he had a singular wit, and was very
ingenious and subtill in cavillations, and pleasant in
words, after he came to his speech.*

Whereunto are added the Fables of *Aelian* : and also
the Fable of *Alphonse*, with the Fables of *Poge the
Florentine*, very pleasant to be read.



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This Historie makerh mention how Esop excused him selfe before his Lord, for eating of the Figges.

And for as much as his Lord to whom Esop was bound, supposed y he was not profitable, he sent him to labour in the fields, and to dig and delve in the earth. And on a day as his lord walked in the fields, one of his labourers gathered figs, and presented them vnto him, saying, My Lord, take these figs as for the first fruits of thy field. And the Lord receiued them ioyfully, and delibered them to his seruant Agapotus, charging him to keep them vntill he returned from his baine. And it hapned, that Esop coming from his labour, demanded dinner, like as he was accustomed; & Agapotus which kept the figs ate of them, and said to one of his fellows, If I did not doubt and feare mymaster, I would eat all these figs. And his fellow said, if thou wilt let me eat with thee, I shall find a craft that we shall haue neither blame ne harme therefore. How may that be said Agapotus? To whom his fellow said when my Lord shall come home, we will say to him, that Esop hath eaten them. And because he cannot speake, he shall not excuse himselfe, and therefore he shall be wel beaten. And hereupon they went and ate the figs between them both, saying, this villaine shall be well beaten. And when their lord came home he commanded Agapotus to bring him the figs: and Agapotus said vnto him, Sir, when Esop came from his labour from the field, he found the cellar open, and went in without reason, and hath eat all the figs. And when the Lord heard this, he was much angry, and said: call to me Esop, to whom he said, thou counterfet churle, how is this hapned, that thou hast not been afraid to eat my figs? whereof Esop was afraid and beheld them that had accused him. And the Lord commanded to take off his cloths and let him be beaten, but he kneeled downe at the Lords feet, and by signes

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(because

(because he could not speak) prayed his Lord to giue him space to excuse him: and his Lord granted it to him. And anon after he tooke a vessel full of hot water, which was on the fire and pored the same into a bason, and drank thereof. And anon after he put his finger into his mouth, and cast vp all that was in his stomack, which was only water, for that day he had tasted nothing but water: and he prayed that his accusers might semblably drinke of the water as he had done. And so they did, and held their hand before their mouths because they would not vomit. But because the water was hot, & their stomacks resolved by the water, they vomited by the water, and the figs together. And when the Lord saw it, he said to them, why haue ye lied to me against this Esop who cannot speak: and then he commanded to spoile them, & beate them openly, saying: Whosoever doth or layeth wrong upon other, shall be punished with the same paine that is due therefore. And these things seen and experimented, Esop returned againe to his labour. And as he laboured in the field, there came a priest named Isidis, which went toward the Citie and had lost his way. And he seeing Esop, prayed him that he would shew him the right way to the Citie. And Esop receiued him ioyfully, and made him to sit down vnder a fig tree, & set before him bread, hearbs, figs and Dates, and made signes to him to eat, and drew water of a pit, and gave him to drinke. And when he had well eaten, he tooke him by the hand, and set him in the right way for to go to the Citie. After which things done, the Priest lift vp his hand to heauen making his prayers to the gods for Esop, of whom he receiued so good refreshing.

How The Goddesse of Hospitalitie gave speech of tounge to Esop, and how he was sold.

Then Esop returned to his labour, and after when he had well laboured, for to eschew the great heat of the Sun (after this vlsage) he went into the shadow for

for to rest and sleepe vnder a tree. And when the Goddess of Hospitality appeared vnto him, and gave him Sapience and Ability, also she gaue to him the gift of speech, for to speak diuers fables & inuentions, as to him which was right deboute to hospitality. And after when Esop was awaked he began to say to himselfe, I haue not only slept but sweetly rested, but also I haue had a faire dreame, and without any impeachment I speake, and all that I see I call by their proper names: as an horse, an ore, a chariot, and to all other things, I can giue to euery one his name. For I haue receiued suddenly the grace of this knowledge, for the great pittie that I haue had on them which lacked hospitality; for he that doth well, ought to haue good hope in God, that he shall haue good reward therefore, and therefore I shall not labour lesse than I did before. And thus when Esop began to labour, there came he that had the charg of the field, & the ouer sight, & anon he began to beat one of the labourers grievously, whereat Esop was greatly displeased, & said to him in this manner: why beatest thou him for nought: and ebery houre thou comnest and beatest vs without any cause, thou killest vs & doest nought thy selfe. But I shall tell to my Lord all this matter like as thou shalt well know of it. And when the Procurator heard him called by his own name Zenas, he marvelled that Esop spake and thought in himselfe, I shal go before my Lord to the end that this foule villain complaine not of me & that my Lord put not me from my place. And he took his mule, and rode vnto the City, and came to his Lord, and said, My Lord, I humbly salute you. And the Lord looked on him & said, why comest thou so afraid and troubled? And Zenas said vnto him, that now in the field is hapned a thing monstrous. What is that said the Lord: haue the trees brought forth their fruit before their time: or haue the beasts brought forth their fruit against nature? And Zenas answered him: nay my Lord, but the

crooked churle, the counterfeited Esop, becometh to speak clearly. Truly said his Lord, this indeed is a thing y^e to me seemeth monstrous: yea forsooth, said Zenas. then said the Lord, we see daily many men when they be angry cannot speak, but when they be in peace, can well speak, and proffer things. And when Zenas said, my Lord, he can speak aboue all other, and hath said to me things contumelious, blasphemous, and villainous, of thee and all thy goods. Whereat his Lord was very angry, and said, Goe thou to the field, and what wilt thou do with him, do it, sell him, or giue him, or lose him, for I giue him to thee. And then Zenas took his gift by writing, and came again into the field, and said to Esop, now thou art mine, and in my power; for my Lord hath giuen thee to me, and because thou art a villaine and an evil churle, I shall sell thee utterly. And then it fortuneth that a Merchant that had bought seruants, came into y^e field to buy beasts, for to bear ouer his merchandize to Ephesus, the which met with Zenas, and saluted him, and demanded of him if he had any beasts to sell. And Zenas answered, that for nothing he should find no beasts to sell, but I haue a seruant which is not faire, and he is of a good age, which if thou wilt thou shalt buy. And the Merchant said, he would first see him. And then Zenas called Esop & shewed him to the Merchant. And when the Merchant saw him so foule and deformed, he said in this manner: From whence is this villaine come, and this trumpet of Tragedies? this is a faire merchandize, for if he had not a voice, I should take him for a bottle of wind: ye be well occupied to bring me hither to shew me this faire personage. I supposed thou wouldst haue sold to me a comely seruant, honest and pleasant. And then the Merchant returned on his way, and Esop followed him, saying in this manner. Abide a little here; & the Merchant said hinder me not villiane, for thou maiest haue no profit of me; for if I bought thee, I should be called the Merchant of

of fooles, and of vaine things. And then Esop said vnto him, Wherefore art thou then come hither: and the Merchant answered him, to buy some thing that is faire and comely, but thou art foule, deformed, lothsome, and counterfeited: Wherefore I meane to haue no whit at al to do with such merchandize. And then Esop said, if thou wilt buy me, thou shalt lese nothing. And the Merchant demanded wherein maiest thou do me any profit: Then Esop said: Be there not in thy house little children, ne in the toiwne that cry and run: buy me and thou shalt do wisely, and shalt be their Master, for they shall dread and feare me like a false visage. And then the Merchant smiled at the words of Esop, and returned back to Zenas, asking him how he would sell that faire merchandize. Zenas said vnto him, giue me thirty pound or three half pence for him: for I wot well that no man will buy him: and then the Merchant paid for him as much as he was wel content with, and Esop went with his Master into his countrey. And as he entred into y^e house he saw the children lying in the lap of their mother, then said Esop to the Merchant, Now shalt thou haue experience of that I haue promised, for since these little children haue seene me, they haue been still and afraid. And then the Merchant laughing, bade him to enter, and he seeing his fellows faire & pleasant, saluted them saying, I salute you my faire fellows. Now when they saw Esop they said al, we shall haue anon a faire personage; what will our Master do to buy such a man, so foule and so deformed: And their Lord answered, because that I haue found no beasts to help you, therefore I haue bought this gallant, to help you to beare your carriage, wherefore part among you y^e sardles for to beare. And Esop said to them, O my good fellows, ye see well that I am the least and feeblest, I pray you therefore to giue me the lightest burthen: and his fellows said to him, because thou maiest bare nothing: To whom Esop said, because ye do all the

labour, it is not meet that I only should be idle, and unprofitable to my Lord.

How Esop demanded the lighter burthen, but to the seeming he tooke the heaviest, which was at la the lightest, and so he beguiled his fellowes.

Then his fellowes said to him thus, which wilt thou bear? And Esop beholding all the burthens, sardles, packs, and panniers, toke a pannier full of bread, which two of the bearers were ready to haue borne, and said: let me haue this pannier to beare. Then they said he was the most foole of them, because he might haue chosen the lightest, and took the heaviest. But he took the pannier of bread, and went before all his fellowes: which when his fellowes beheld and saw, they all said that their master had not lost his money, for he was strong, and might bear yet a heavier burthen; and thus they mocked him, but alwaies Esop was at his lodging before his fellowes. And when they were arrived at their lodging, their master made them to rest, and commanded Esop to bring forth bread to eat, and so he took bread out of his panter, that his panter was halfe empty. And when they had well eaten, each of them tooke his burthen, and Esop bore lesse than he did, and came to his lodging before his fellowes, and at supper he gaue so much bread, that his panter was all empty. And on the next day he took his panter, and went so fast before his fellowes that they knew him not, so that one demanded, Who he is that goeth so far before vs? And another said, it is the crooke-backed and counterfeited charle, which by his subtilty hath deceiued vs that bare the burthens not consumed by the way, but he hath aboyded his burthen and is more wily then we be. And when they came to Ephesus, the merchant led his merchandize to the market, and also his three seruants to sell which were named Garmaticus, Saltis, and Esop: and a merchant said to him, if thou wilt sel thy seruants at

at a reasonable price, there is a Philosopher named Exantus, to whom much people go to learn at a place called Somnon, lead thy servants thither & the Philosopher will buy them: and the merchant did wel array Garmaticus and Saltis with new robes, and led them thither for to sel: but because Esop was so foule and loathsome, he was clad in canuas, & was set between the other two which were fair, pleasant, and well favoured me; but all they that beheld Esop were abashed because of his deformity, saying: From whence cometh this fellow? And because they so wondred at him, he looked all ouerthwartly on them boldly.

Of the second sale of Esop.

AND when the market day came, Exantus the Philosopher departed out of his house, and went to and fro throughout the market, and he saw these two young men, and Esop standing between them, wherat he marvelled greatly for what cause the merchant had so sorted them, and approaching to one of them, he said in this manner, Of what country art thou? And he answered: I am of Cappadocce. And Exantus demanded of him, saying: what canst thou do? And he answered, I can do all things that thou wilt: which answer when Esop heard, he laughed, shewing his great teeth, and all the schollars that were there with Exantus beholding Esop so soare laughing, shewing his great teeth, they thought they saw a monster and not a man, and said to their fellows this great whozson hath very big teeth, And some asked what they had seene, and they said, that he soze laughed, and shewed them his teeth, and some said he laughed not, but that hee was a cold on his teeth: and one of them demanded wherefore he laughed, calling him gentle gallant: and he said what hast thou to do therewith knave: go thy way: and that scholar departed all ashamed, following his Master. And then Exantus demanded the price of Saltis: & the Merchant said y he should

should pay for him a thousand pence : & Exantus esteeming
 the price ouer deare returned to the other fellow &
 said to him, Of whence art thou? And he said of Lido; &
 Exantus asked of him, what canst thou do? And he said,
 I can do all things that thou wænest : and when Esop
 heard these words, he laughed more then he did before;
 And when the scholars saw him laugh again, they said:
 this fellow laugheth at all things. Then. Exantus de-
 manded the price of Garmaticus, and the Merchant said
 three M.crowns. which Exantus thought too dear, & went
 his way. Then the scholars said to their Master, These
 seruants please thee not : yes, said Exantus : they please
 mee well, but it is ordained in our City, that no seruant
 should be bought at so high a price, vpon a great paine.
 And one of the scholars said: seeing they that be faire can-
 not be bought, buy him that is foule and deformed, tru-
 ly he shal do thee some service, & the price he shall be sold
 for, we our selves will pay. And Exantus said to them, If
 I should buy this villain y is so foule & vnclean, my wife
 would not be well pleased, for she is so curious, that she
 may not suffer her self to be serued of such a counterfeit-
 ed seruant. And then the scholars said, Master thou dost
 many things, with which thy wife shall not gain say nor
 meddle. Then Exantus said to them, let vs then demand
 of him w^hat he can do, lest for default of asking we should
 lose our mony. Then Exantus turned him to Esop & said,
 God save thee young man : and Esop said to him in this
 manner, I pray thee griue me not. Then Exantus said
 to Esop, I salute you. So do I thee, said Esop. Well, leave
 these mocks, said Exantus, & answer me that I shall de-
 mand : and he asked what art thou? and Esop answered,
 I am of flesh & bone. Then Exantus said, I demand not
 that, but where wast thou born? and Esop answered, In
 the womb of my mother: and Exantus said, yet I ask not
 that of thee, but I ask in what place thou wert born: and
 Esop said, my mother never told nor assured me, whether
 she

she was deliuered of me in the chamber or in the hall. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell me what thou canst do: Esop said, nothing. Exantus said: What canst thou do nothing? Esop said no. Wherefore, said Exantus? Because said Esop, my fellows say they can do all things, and then will they leaue nothing for me to do. Then the scholars were much abashed, and had great maruell at him, saying: This fellow answereth by diuine wisdom, for there is none to be found that can do all things, and therefore he laughed. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tel me if thou wilt that I shall buy thee: & Esop said, That is in thee, no man shall constrain thee thereto: neuertheless, if thou wilt buy me, open thy purse, & tell the mony, and make the bargain. Then the scholars sware by all the gods, this fellow exceedeth our Master. Then Exantus said to him in this manner, If I buy thee, wilt thou not run away: then Esop answered, If thou thinke that I will run away, I counsell thee not to buy me. Surely, said Exantus, thou sayest well, but thou art very lothsome and deformed. To whom Esop said, Men ought not only to behold the face of a man, but rather to regard his courage. Then Exantus demanded of the Merchant, what shall I pay for this Esop: And the merchant said to him, thou art a foolish merchant to leaue these faire & goodly seruants, and to take him that can do nothing, take one of these two and let this Ass go: and Exantus said, I require thee to tell me what I shall pay. Then the Merchant said threescore pence. Then the Scholars told out the mony to the Merchant, and thus by this bargain, Esop became seruant vnto Exantus. And when the banquers receiued the mony for the sale of Esop, they demanded curiously who were the buyer and seller. Then Exantus and the Merchant compounded and accorded between them, that he had not been sold for so much mony. But Esop said to the Banquers, this is he that hath bought mee, and this is he that hath sold mee, which thing they will

will deny, wherefore I affirme and say, that I am free. Then the Banquers laughed at his cauillation, and went and receiued the price of Exantus, for as much as he had bought Esop.

How Exantus brought Esop home to his Wife.

Then when every man was departed, Esop folloined Exantus home to his house, and when he came before his house, he said to Esop, abide here a while before the gate, until I go in for to praise thee to my lady, & mistress my wife. Well sir, said Esop: & then Exantus entred into his house, and said to his wife, Dame, ye shall no more haue cause to be at debate with me, for ye haue desire me long to get you a faire seruant, wherefore now I haue bought one that is so wise, & so pleasant that thou neuer sawest one better. And when two of the Ladies servants heard him say so, weening y^e it had bin truth, they began to stribe together, and the one began to say to the other, My Lord hath bought for me a faire husband: & the other said: This might haue I dreamed that I was married: and thus his servants talked. But his wife said my Lord where is the fair fellow that ye praise so much: I pray you let me see him: and Exantus said, he is before the gate. And his wife said, I pray you bring him in: and as the two young women had debate for him, on of them thought in her self, I shall see him first, and if I may he shall be my Husband, and so she issued out of the house, and said: where is this faire young man that I desire to see, and Esop said to her, what demandest thou: I am he. And when she saw Esop, she was abashed, and said vnto him, Art thou the faire Peacock: where is thy taile: And Esop said to her again, If thou haue need of a taile, thou shalt not faile of one. And then as he would haue gone in, the servant said vnto him, Come not here; for all that shal see thee wil run away. And after she went in, & told her fellow what he was: and when she came out, and saw him so deformed, she said beware thou knowe that thou

thou touch me not: & when Esop entred into þ house, anon he was presented to the Lady: & when the Lady saw him, anon she turned to Exantus and said: and instead of a servant thou hast bought a monster, throw him out: and Exantus said to her, My wife thou oughtest to be glad & topfull, because I haue brought to thee so fair & so good a servant: and she said to Exantus, now wot I well that thou louest me not, for thou desirest to haue another wife, and because thou durst not tell it me, thou hast bought me this foule great knaue, to the intent that I go from thee: I will no longer abide, for thou knowest well that I may not suffer him, and therefore deliuer me my dowry, and I shall go my way. And then Exantus said to Esop, when we were on the way thou spakest largely, and now thou sayest nothing: and Esop said to him, because thy wife is so malicious put her in prison. Exantus said, hold thy peace, else shalt thou be beaten. Seest thou not that I loue her more than my selfe: then said Esop, I pray thee that thou loue her well: and she said, wherefore not? Then Esop smot his foot on þ pavement, and cryed out with a loud voice, saying: Woe this Philosopher Exantus is overcome of a woman: and then Esop turned him to his Lady, & said to her, Wadum I pray you take not my words at the worst. Thou wouldest haue a servant that were young, wel formed, wel arraid, strong and rich, to serue thee at thy dinner, and bear thee to thy bed, that can rub and claw thy feet, and not such a foule man and so deformed a servant as I am: for if thou hadst such a one, thou wouldest set bought by thy husband, and therefore Erupus the Philosopher had his mouth of God, which neuer lyed. He said that there were many perils and torments on the Sea, and other great riuers, & also pouerty is a hard thing, & difficult to be borne: & also there be many other great dangers, & troubles infinit: but there is no worse danger nor peril than a false woman. And therefore Wadum, I pray you & you take no more a false servant

nor pleasant to serue thee, lest therby thou dishonor thy Lord & husband. Then she said to Esop, auoid hence thou villain, which art not only deformed of thy body, but also of thy words. But I shall go my way. Then said Exantus to Esop, Thou seest how thou hast angered my Wife, see thou please her; and Esop said, it is no small thing to please the ire of a woman, but a great thing. Exantus said to Esop, speake no more, for I haue bought thee to make peace, and not to make debate and strife.

How Exantus brought Esop into a Garden.

EXantus bade Esop take a pannier, and follow him into the Garden. And Exantus said to the Gardiner, Giue vs of thy herbs: and the gardiner cut off the herbs in diuers places, and deliuered them to Esop, and he tooke them, and Exantus paid for them: and when he was departing, the gardner said to him, Master, I pray thee that thou wilt assoile me a question: Well, said Exantus, ask what thou wilt: and the Gardiner demanded of him, saying; Master, what is the cause that the herbs that be not labored, grow faster & sooner then they that be curiously laboured? This question answered Exantus, that they came by some providence by which the things were brought forth. When Esop heard this answer he began to laugh. And Exantus said to him; Thou villaine, laughest thou me to scorn: and Esop said, I mock thee not, but him that hath learn'd thee thy Philosophy; what solution hast thou made? What is that that commeth of Diuine Providence? A child of a kitchen will make as good an answer. Exantus then said to Esop, make thou then a better solution. Esop said vnto him, If thou command me I shall gladly. Exantus said vnto him; It appertaineth not to him that iudgeth things of difficulty, to iudge rude things & rusticall, but I haue a seruant here which shal inform and giue the solution of thy question, if thou wilt request him. And the Gardiner replied. Can this villaine palliard that is so greatly deformed, answer to this

this question: Then the Gardner said to Esop, hast thou knowledge of such things? And Esop said, Yea truly, more then all the men in the world. For thou requirest wherefore the hearbs that be not laboured, grow sooner than they that be sown & laboured: Esop replied, Take heed to my answer: for as a woman that hath bin a widow, and hath had children by her first husband that is dead, and after was married to another man which hath had children of another Wife before: and vnto the children of her first husband she is a mother, and to the other children, she is but a step-mother. Thus there is a difference between her own children, & that other womans. For her children she hath nourished peaccably, and the other in anger and wrath. In this manner it is of the earth; she is mother of the hearbs that grow without labour, and is but step-mother to the hearbs that grow by labour and force. Said þ Gardner then, thou hast eased me of much study; therefore I pray thee take of the hearbs that be in my Garden at all times, and when you list.

How Esop did beare the Present.

One time, when the scholars had been in the auditory with Exantus, one of the scholars drest precious meats for the supper of Exantus and others: and when they were at supper Exantus tooke of the best meats, and put them in a platter, and said to Esop, Go bear this to her that loues me best; And Esop thought in himself, now is it time to avenge me best on my Mistris. And when he came home into the Hall, he said to his Mistris: Madame, beware þ ye eat not of this meat. And his Lady said, I wot well alwaies that thou art a great sole. Esop said to her, Exantus hath not commanded me to giue it to thee, but to her that loueth him best.

Then Esop presented þ platter to a little hound, which was alwaies in the house, saying to her: My Lord hath sent thee this precious meat: Then the wife of Exantus went

Went into her chamber and began to weep. And Esop returned to Exantus, and he asked him, how his love fared: he said, Right well; & all the meat that I haue set before her she hath eaten it. And Exantus said, what said she: & he said, My Lord, she sayeth nothing, but she desireth to see thee. When they had well eaten and drunke, one asked when mortall men shall haue most to do: Esop said, that shall be at the day of iudgment. The scholars hearing this, said: this villaine is full of answers, and nothing said, Why goeth the sheepe to his death following his master, and saying nothing, and when the swine is brought to be slaine, he doth both cry and bray: And Esop answered and said: because it is accustomed to milke and sheare sheepe, and he wieneth, that he shall be forth with either milked or shorne, and therefore feareth not at al: but because the swine is not accustomed to be milked or shorne, but to be letten blood and to lose his life, therefore he dreadeth when he is taken. And all the scholars said it is troth: Loe this man is wise, and hath said well. Then each man arose & went his way.

And when Exantus was returned home to his house, he entred into his chamber, and found his wife soare weeping, and he said vnto her, my sweet loue how is it with you: and kissed her, and she turned her back to him, and said, let me alone, I haue not to do with thee, I wil go from thee for thou louest better thy hound than me, to whom thou hast sent thy precious meat, And because he knew nothing thereof, he demanded, what meat hath Esop brought to thee: And she said none at all. Exantus said, I am not drunke, I sent to thee by Esop a platter full of precious meat, and she said: not to me, but to thy hound. Then he called Esop and demanded of him to whom hast thou giben the meat I deliuered to thee: & he said to her that loneth thee best, like as thou commandest me. And Exantus said to his
and

wife vnderstandest thou not what he saith: I vnderstand her well, said she, but he gave to me nothing, but gave it to thy hound. Then Exantus turned to Esop, and said to him: Thou great villaine, to whom hast thou borne the meat I deliuered to thee: Esop answered, to her that loued thee best. And Exantus demaundeth who was she: And Esop called the little hound, and said: this is she, for the loue of thy wife is right nought; for if thee be a little angry, incontinent she reynoueth thee, and speaketh violently vnto thee that louest her, and will say, I will go from thee and leaue thy house: and if this hound go from thee, call her againe, and she cometh anon, making thee cheere, and therefore thou oughtest to say to thy wife, and not to her that loueth thee best. Then Exantus said to his wife, thou seest this fellove is a railer and an inuenter of words, and therefore haue patience, for I shall find cause to auenge thee, and beat him. And she said, do what thou wilt, for I shall neuer haue more to do with him, and after that thy hound, for I shall go my way: and without saying farewell, she went home to her freinds. And Exantus was angry and sorrowfull for her departing: and Esop said to him, now seest thou wel that thy wife that is gone loueth thee not, but this little hound abideth by thee. Exantus all heauy for his wifes departing, prayed her to returne, but it auailed not: for the more a woman is prayed, the more she is obstinate, and will do the contrary.

How Esop made his Lady come home againe.

AND because Exantus was angry for the departing of his wife, Esop said to him, Dasse he not angry, for without praying I shall make her returne, and come againe unbidden. So that she shall be more lowely, meekie, and obedient to your commandements then euer she was before. And then Esop went to the mar-

ket and bought capons and many other pulles, and as he bare them passing by the house where his mistresse was, it happned that one of the seruants of the house came out. And Esope demanded of him, haue ye sent nothing to the wedding of my Lord? To what wedding, said the seruant? Vnto the wedding of Exantus said Esope, for to morrow he shall wed a wife. And anon the seruant went into the house and said to Exantus wife; Madam there be new tidings. What be they said she? Exantus shall haue a wife and be married, and forthwith incontinent she departed and came home to the house of Exantus crying: Now knowe I the troth, and wherefore thou madest this great villain to anger me, because thou wouldest take another wife, but I shall keepe thee well therefore, for as long as I liue shall neuer woman come here, Exantus be thou sure. Then was Exantus ioyfull for to haue againe his wife, and gaue Esope great thanks.

How Exantus sent Esope to the market, to buy the best meat he could get, and how he bought nothing but tongues.

AND a little while after, Exantus had his scholars to dinner with him, and said vnto Esope, go anon to the market, and buy vs of the best meat thou canst find. And Esope went to the market and thought in himselfe, now shall I shew that I am no foole, but wise. And when Esope came to the market, he bought the tongues of Swine and Oren, and dight them with Vineger, and set them on the table, and the scholars said to Exantus, Thy dinner is full of Philosophy. And Exantus said to Esope, bring vs our meat, and Esope brought them more tongues arraied in another manner, that is to wit, with Garlick and Onions. Then said the scholars, these tongues be well drest, for one differeth from another; and Exantus bade Esope bring other meat. And Esope brought yet forth tongues. Then were the scholars angry, and said, wilt thou auaies giue vs tongues? And Exantus all angry in his courage

courage, said to Esop, what other meat hast thou ordain-
 ned for vs? And Esop said none other. Then Exantus said
 to Esop, thou great headed villain, said I not to thee that
 thou shouldst buy of the best meat that thou couldst
 find: so haue I said Esop, and thanked be God that here
 is a Philosopher, for I would faine know of the Phi-
 losopher what is better then a tongue: for certainly all
 Art, all doctrine, and all Philosophy, be notified by
 the tongue, without the which there could be no joy or
 company among men; for by it the laines are declared,
 by it the good receiue praise, the euill rebukes, the sor-
 rowfull comfort, the foolish instruction, the wise men
 knowledge, and finally, the greatest part of the life of
 mortall men is in the tongue, and therefore there is no-
 thing better then the tongue, nor no hing more profit-
 table vnto men. Then said the scholars, thou doest
 wrong to be angry, for Esop saith right well. And after
 all these words, they rose from the table. And on the
 morrow after, Exantus excusing himself in their courte-
 sare, desired them to come again to supper, & they should
 haue other fare: and Exantus said to Esop in the presence
 of them that were there; go to the market, and buy the
 worst meat that thou canst find, for all my freinds
 shall sup here with me. So Esop without troubling of
 himself, went into the butchery & bought again tongues
 and dight them as he did before; and when they came
 to supper, he serued them with tongues as he did be-
 fore. And the scholars said, be we come againe to the
 tongues? And because the scholars were not pleased,
 Exantus said to Esop, thou art a great headed villaine;
 said I not to thee thou shouldst buy the worst meat that
 thou couldst find? So haue I done said Esop; for what
 is worse or more venomous then an euill tongue? By
 the tongue men perish, by the tongue they fall into po-
 uerty, by the tongue cities are destroyed, by the tongue
 commeth much harme, Then said one of them that sat
 at the table, Exantus if thou set thy mind upon this sole

he wil bring thee out of thy wit, for he sheweth well by his fashions that he is knauish: and like as he is deformed of his body, so is he of his conditions. And Esop said to him, thou art a make-bate, for thou makest strife betwixt the Master and the seruant, and weeneest thou to be more curious then other? And Exantus for to find cause to beat Esop, said ah, great headed villaine, because thou callest the Philosopher curious, go get me a man that careth for nothing, that is to say, one that is nothing curious nor diligent.

How Esop went out. and found one that cared for nothing.

ESop departed and went out of the place, beholding here and there, if he could find any man that was not curious nor cared for nothing: he went abroad and espied a great villaine sitting on a blocke, wagging his legs and whistling with his mouth, to whom Esop said, My Lord desireth thee to come and dine with him; which anon rose, without saying any word, and entered into the house with Esop, and not saying God speed you, sate downe at the table. And Exantus said to Esop, what man is this? Esop said, a man that careth for nothing. Then Exantus said vnto his wife secretly, to the intent we may auenge vs on esop, and beate him well, faire lone do that I bid you. Then he said aloud, dame put water in a bason and wash this pilgrimes feet, for he thought the villaine would not haue suffered it, but to haue refused it for shame, and then should he haue had cause to haue beaten Esop. Then the Lady tooke water and put it in a bason, and began to wash the villaines feet. And howbest that she was his Lady: yet this villaine thought, this Lord will do me some worship, and suffered her to wash his feet, without saying any word. And Exantus said to his wife, dame giue him drinke. And the villaine said to himselfe, it is well worthy that I drinke first, and
he

he tooke the peece and dranke as much as he might. And Exantus tooke the Platter with the Fish, and set before him. And the villain strained no curtesie, but eat every morsell. And Exantus said unto the rooke, this fish is not well drest. Then Exantus commanded the Cooke to be beaten. And the Villain said to himself, this fish is wel dight, and the Cooke is beaten without cause, but I care not, so that I may fill my belly, and I shall alway eat and say nothing. Exantus said unto the Cook, bring in a Tart, and incontinent as a tart was brought, the Villain brake it in peeces, and without any words he began to eat thereof. And Exantus beholding him how he eate, called the Cooke, and said, this tart is evill baked and hath no savour. And the Cooke said if I made it, it is well drest, and if it be none of mine, the blame is not in me but in thy wife. Exantus said, Then and if my wife hath made it, I shall burne her alive; and bade his wife she should not answer, because he would find cause to beate Esop; and then said Exantus to one of his servants, go fetch some wood and bushes to burne my wife: and this said he to see if the villaine would rise to saue her from burning; and the villaine said to himselfe, this man will burne his wife without cause. Then said he vnto Exantus; Sir, if thou wilt burne thy wife, abide a little while, and I shall go fetch my wife in the field, and burne them both together. Exantus hauing heard these words, he marvelled much, and said, verily this man careth for nothing. And then he said to Esop, thou hast vanquished me, but now let it suffice thee, from hence forth, if thou wilt serue me truly, thou shalt sooner returne into thy liberty. Then Esop said vnto him, I shall serue thee so now as thou wert neuer better served. Now three daies after Exantus said to Esop, Go and see if there be much people in the Bath, for if there be none, I will go there and bath me: and as Esop went by the way, he met with the Iudge of the City; and

because he knew him, he said to Esope, whether goest thou great head? Esope said vnto him I wot not: because he wented he mocked him, the Judge commanded him to prison: and as he was led he said to the judge, loe I said to thee wel, that I wist not whether I went: for I supposed thou wouldest not haue put me in prison. And the Judge began to smile, and said to them that led him, let him go. And as Esope went to the baine he saw a great company of men which were there leaping, and there lay a stone at the entry doore, at which they stumbled and hurt their feet, and there was one that entred in and stumbled thereon, and anon he tooke it alway, because y there should no more be hurt thereat. After Esope returned home to his master Exantus, and said that there was but one man in the baine: Exantus then said to Esope, take such things as be needfull for vs and let vs go thither: and when they were come to the baine, he saw a great company, and said to Esope, now art thou worthy to be beaten, for thou saydest to me there was but one man, and there be more then a hundred. And Esope said to him, there is but one man, and if thou wilt heare me, thou shalt say that I say troth: for that stone which thou seest at the entry of the bath, all that passed by, stumbled at the stone, and none was so wise to take it away but this one man, and therefore I say, that there was no man but he, for all the other are but children and ignorant. And Exantus said to him, thou hast well excused thee: and Exantus found no cause to beat Esope.

Of the answer that Esope made to
his Master.

After that Exantus had washed him, he went homeward, and as he went he purged his belly and eased him by the way, and Esope was beside with a paille full of water. And Exantus said to Esope, wherfore is it, that when a man hath eased him, and purged his

his belly, he looketh vpon the ordure thereof: And Esop answered him, and said: There was in times past a Philosopher that oft purged his belly, and for feare that he should leese his science, euer looked and beheld if he voided it with his filth or ordure when he had purged his belly; and so euer after men looked when they purged their bellies what they voided; but thou oughtest not to doubt thereof, for thou hast no wit nor science to leese; for to a foolish demand belongeth a foolish answer. And on the morrow next following, as Exantus was set at the table with all his freinds, holding a cup with wine in his hand, his hand shooke for feare of the questions that men asked him. And Esop said, Master, L ionysius saith, that good wine hath three vertues, the first is volaptuousnesse, the second is gladnesse, and the third is that it maketh men soles and out of their wits: wherefore I pray thee let vs drinke and make good chere: and because that Exantus was then almost drunke (for he had well drunken) he said to Esop, hold thy peace, for thou art a counsellor of hell, I shall auenge me on thy selfe.

How Exantus promised to drinke all the water in the Sea,

AND then one of the scholars, seeing that Exantus had drunke enough, and was charged with ouermuch wine, said vnto him, my master, I aske of thee, if a man may drinke the sea? Wherefore not, said Exantus? I my selfe shall drinke it well. Then said the Scholar againe, and if thou drinke it not, what wilt thou leese? And Exantus said, My house, I am content said the Scholar, and against thee. I will lay an hundred crownes on the bargaine; and this done, each of them gaue their pledges, their signet of gold, and then went home. and on the morrow Exantus rose out of his bed, and saw that he had lost his ring off his finger, he said to Esop, knowest thou not where my ring is?

I know not said Esop, but well I know for certaine, that this day we shall be put out of our house. And why said Exantus? Esop said to him, remembrest thou not the bargain that thou madest vesterday at euen? that bargain said Exantus? Esop said, that thou art bound to drinke all the sea, and for gage hast left thy ring of gold; and when Exantus heard these words, he was sore abashed, and said: in what manner shall I drinke all the sea? this may not be, for it is impossible: wherefore Esop I pray thee tell me, if it please thee, how I may vanquish or breake this bargain. And Esop said, thou shalt leese, but perhaps I shall make that thou shalt well breake the bargain; And the manner of it (said Esop) is this, that when thine aduersary shall require thee to fulfill thy promise, thou shalt command servants that they bring a table, and all such other things as is necessary to be vpon the riwage of the sea, and make the butlers and seruants there to abide with thee, and before all the company thou shalt make a peece to be washed and filled full of the water of the sea, and shalt take it in thy hand, and pray that the Bargaine may be declared before all the fellowship, and say thou wilt assure the promise as well before drinke as after; and thus thou shalt say to all the fellowship, My Lords of Samie, ye know how vesterday at euen, I made promise to drinke up all the water in the sea. But all ye wot well how many great flouds and riuers come and fall into the sea. Therefore I demand (and as reason is) that mine aduersary keep and hold the riuers that they enter not into the sea, and then shall I drinke all the waters in the sea; and so the bargain shall be broken and vndone.

How Exantus excused him from his promise
by the counsell of Esop.

EXantus then knowing that the counsell of Esop was good, he was full glad. His aduersary then came before

before Zenas, one of the city, to sell and shew the bargain, and prayed the iudge that Exantus should do that which he had promised to do. And Exantus commanded all his seruants that they should beare his bed, and his table, and all other things that were necessary to him vpon the ribage of the sea. And then before all the company he made a piece to be washed, and filled it full of the water of the sea, which he tooke in his hand and said to his aduersary, declare we now our bargain: and Exantus then turned him toward the fellowship and said, my Lords of Samy, ye wot well how many floods and riuers enter into the sea, and if my aduersary will hold them still, so that they enter no more into the sea, then will I drinke all the water that is in the sea. And all they that were there began to say, Exantus saith well. And the aduersary said to Exantus, my master, thou hast vanquished me; wherefore I pray thee, that our bargain may be broken. Exantus said I am content: and when Exantus was turned home into his house, Esop did pray to him saying thus: My master, because I haue holpen thee at thy need, let me now goe at my liberty.

How Exantus found cause to
beate Esop.

EXantus then cursed him, saying: great head, yet shalt thou not escape free nor go from me: go thou, see and behold before the gate if thou canst espie two crolues together, and then come againe and tell me, for the sight of two crolues one nigh the other is good fortune, but the sight of one alone is euill fortune. And as Esop went out of the house, he saw two crolues vpon a tree, wherefore he soon returned again and told his Master. But as Exantus went out of the house, the one of them flew away, then said he, ah great head, where be the two crolues that thou saiest? And Esop said, as I went to call thee, the one flew away. And Exantus said, ah thou crooke-backed knaue, it is euer thus

thus thy manner to mock me : but thou shalt not thus scape scot-free, wherefore he commanded him to undoe his clothes, that hee might be beaten ; and as the men were beating him, Exantus was called to dinner and then Esop said, alas, how much miserable am I : for I have seene two crows and yet am I beaten, and exantus which saw but one, is called to dainty fare : surely there is none to whom the birds be so contrary as to me. And when Exantus heard him, he much marvelled at the subtilty of his wit, and commanded to leaue beating him. And within a while after, Exantus said to Esop, Goe thou and dresse vs some meat to our dinner, for all these Lords shall dine with me, and Esop went to the market and bought all that he could buy, and when it was ready, he brought it into the Hall, where he found his Mistris lying on the bed sleeping : wherefore he awaked her and said : Madam, please it you, to take heed of this meat that the dogs and cats eat it not, for I must goe into the kitchen again : and she said to him ; Goe where thou wilt, for my buttocks haue eyes. And when Esop had made ready all the other meats, he brought them into the Hall, and found his Mistris fast asleep with her buttocks towards the table, ; and because she said that her buttocks had eyes, Esop tooke up her clothes, so as euery man might see her tayle ; and thus he left her sleeping.

How Exantus found his wife
all d scouered.

AND when Exantus and his Schollars came to Dinner, they perceived his wife as she was sleeping her buttocks all bare and naked. With great shame Exantus turned his face toward Esop, saying knaue, what is this : And Esop said : my Lord as I did put the meat upon the table, I prayed my Lady that she would keep it from the dogs, and she answered, that her buttocks had eyes ; and because I found her

her sleeping, I discovered her buttocks, to the intent
 that her buttocks might the better see, and look about.
 Then Exantus replied unto him, ah thou shrewd and
 crook-backed villain, oft hast thou serued me such kna-
 vish tricks: What worse thing canst thou doe to me,
 than to mock both me and my wife also: but the time
 will come that I shall make thee dye an evill death.
 And a while after, Exantus said to Esop: Looke well
 that no fooles enter into my house, but only the Dra-
 tors and Philosophers. Esop set him self beside the
 Gate, and as one of the Philosophers should have en-
 tered, Esop began to grin and say, come in thou dog;
 and the Philosopher thinking he had derided him, all
 wroth, went his way: and thus did many oher. But
 at the last, came there one that was very subtile, to
 whom Esop did as he had done to the other: and he
 that was wise answered him sweetly, and then Esop
 did let him enter into the house, and anon he went a-
 gain to his Lord and said, No Philosopher is come
 to the Gate but this one, wherefore Exantus thought
 all the other had mockt him, and was very angry.
 On the morrow as they met with Exantus, they said
 to him thus Exantus, thou mockedst vs well yester-
 day: for he that kept the gate cast on us a shrewd loke,
 and called vs Dogs: for which cause Exantus was
 more troubled than he was before. And anon he cal-
 led Esop and said to him; Doe thou crook-backed
 counterfeited and false churle; they whom thou shoul-
 dest haue receiued with worship & great honour, those
 thou hast vitupered and mocked. Esop sayd unto
 him, Thou chargedst and commandest me, that I
 should let none enter into thy house but wise Philoso-
 phers. And Exantus sayd: Ah false face, and crook-back-
 ed knave, be not these wise Philosophers? No
 certainly replied Esop; for when I bade them
 enter into thy house, they entered not, but like fowles
 went their wayes again, with out saying any word;
 but

but this one answered wisely; and therefore I repute and allow him a sage and wise Philosopher; and the other as fooles; for a foole is he that taketh any light thing in anger. And then all the Samians and Philosophers that were there, approued the answer of Esop, and they marvelled much at his wisdom.

How Esop found a treasure, and how Exantus made him to be put in prison.

AND within a while after, as Exantus and Esop were together beholding the great sepulchers or tombes, and the Epitaphs of ancient folke, Esop perceived an arch that was nigh to a columnne, vnto the which men went vnto by foure steps; thither he went, and without any consonance he saw letters writtten, after the manner following AGIQFEITA. Then Esop called his master and said vnto him: My Lord, what betokeneth these Letters? Exantus looked and beheld them well, and knew not what they should signifie: wherefore he said to Esop, tell me what these letters signifie, and Esop said, my Lord, if I shew thee a faire treasure, what reward shall I haue of thee? Exantus said, haue thou a good courage, for I shall giue thee freedome, and libertie, and halfe of the treasure: and anon Esop went downe the foure steps, and so deep he delued at the foot of the columnne, that he found the hidden treasure: which anon he brought vp to his Lord and said: My Lord, I pray thee that thou wilt do vnto me as thou hast promised: and Exantus said to him, for euer thou hast liberty and freedome, thou must learne me how thou knowest this Science; for the vnderstanding thereof, shall be more precious vnto me than to haue all the treasure: and Esop said, he that had this treasure, had specified it by the letters which is here writtten in Latine, *Ascende gradus istos quatuor, fodias & inuenies Thesaurum auri.*

Then

Then Exantus told him : Sith thou art so subtil, thou shalt not yet have liberty : and Esop said unto him, looke well what thou doest, for this treasure appertaineth to the king Dionysius. And Exantus asked of him how he knew that : and Esop said, by the letters which signifie unto vs : that thou gine unto Dionysius the treasure which thou hast found. And when Exantus heard him say that the treasure which he found was appertaining to the king Dionysius, he said thus, Esop, take thou the one halfe of this treasure, and let no man know of it. Esop then said unto him, thou giuest it not me, but he that hid it here giueth it unto me. And Exantus said, how knowest thou that : Esop answered, by the letters following, which signifie the same, to wit, E D Q I T A. The which letters signifie in Latine, Euntes dimitte quem inuenistis Thesaurum auri. And then Exantus said, go we home, and there we shall part it.

How Exantus delivered Esop out of prison, and how Exantus promised him freedom and libertie.

After that Exantus was returned home againe, he maruelled greatly at the wisdom of Esop, but for the liberty and freedom which he demanded, he was angry, and dreading the tongue of Esop made him to be put in prison. Then said Esop, this is a faire promise of a Philosopher. Thou wotest well how thou promisedst vnto me freedom and liberty, but in stead thereof I am put into prison. When as Exantus heard him say so, he reboked and changed his sentence, and made him to be deliuered, and after said vnto him, If thou wilt be put to thy liberty, hold thy tongue in peace, and accuse me no more. And Esop said do what thou wilt, for whether thou wilt or no, thou shalt shortly set me at liberty. That same time fell a marvellous thing within the city of Samie, For as men played there the

the Common and publique Playes, as yet they be accustomed to doe in many good Cities, an Eagle suddenly flew through all the company of people, and toke and bare away with him, the Ring and Seale of soveraignty and puissance of all that City, and let it fall into the pit of a man who was not in liberty: for which deed and token, all the people of Samie marvelled greatly, and there arose a great rumor in the City among the people. For much they were doubtfull of some persecution, and wist not what the thing might signifie, wherefore they were in great doubt and heavinesse.

Wherefore incontinent they came toward Exantus as unto him which they held for the most sage and wise man of the City of Samie, and demanded of him what this maruell signified, and also what was likely to fall thereby. Exantus was ignorant, and knew not the signification of this maruell, whereupon he demanded of the people time and space for to give hereupon an answer. Exantus then was in great heavinesse, because he wist not what to say to this thing and Esop seeing him so heavy and so full of sorrow, said unto him, My Master, why art thou so heavy in thy countenance? leaue sorrow and take with thee ioy and gladnesse, give me the charge to answer the Samians, and to morrow thou shalt say to them these words, My Lords of Samia, I am no Divine, nor Interpreter of the marvailous things that be to come, ne uertbelesse, I haue a servant in my house, which (as he saith) can tell these things, if it please you, I shall make him come before you, and then by my Counsell if I can satisfie all the fellowip, thou shalt therefore receiue and haue worship, glory and profit; and if I cannot satisfie them thou shalt be deliuered to great infamy and shame, and I shall be rebuked, and put to great shame: then Exantus hauing histrust in the words of Esop, went on the morrow to the great place
of

of Samie, & assembled there the People. & went vp on high whereas the Iudg was wont to sit: & as he had learned of his seruant Esop, so he declared there before the Samians. The which things when he had said, they prayed him that he would cause his seruant to come before them. And anon Esop came thither, and as he stood before all the company, all the people present looked and beheld him with great maruell, because he was deformed and crooked of body, and said, Woe here is a faire person, able to be a sure Diuine, and went and mocked him. And Esop being then on the highest part of all the place, began to make a signe with his hand vnto all the people, to the end they should hold their peace and keepe silence: and then he spake vnto them in this manner.

My Lords, for what cause laugh ye and scorn me for my form: know ye not, that men must not look in the face of a man, to see and behold of what figure or form he is of, but only to know wisdom: Also men ought not to take heed of the Vessel, for oft a fowle Vessel is full of good Wine. And when the Samians heard these words, they sayd to Esop, If thou canst giue vs good counsell for all the wealth of the common people, we all pray thee that thou wilt doe it.

And then Esop hauing trust & confidence in his wisdom said thus: Fortune (which loueth dissention) hath this day put & set debate & strife between the Lord & the seruant; for he that shall vanquish, shall not be paid nor rewarded after his desert. For if the Lord get the victory, I that am his seruant shall get no liberty, as right requireth, but I shall be beaten and cursed, and imprisoned: wherfore if ye will that I giue a full solution of that ye demand, I ask and require you that ye doe make me free, and set me again into my liberty, to the intent that with trust, confidence, and audacity, I may speak to you: and I promise & assure you that I shall shew you (to your profit) the true signification and plain

And they all said with an equall voice, he asketh a thing very reasonable and iust; wherefore Exantus shall make him free, and giue him his liberty as reason is. Which thing when Exantus heard, he refused to do. And the Lord of the authority publike, said vnto him, Exantus, If thou wilt not obey to the people, I shall by my owne authority, take him out of thy seruice, and shall set him at liberty, and make him equall with thee.

How Esop was restored unto his liberty by the will of his Master.

And because that Exantus was required of all his freinds, that he should restore and put Esop into liberty, he said to Esop, albeit it is not my good will, yet I giue thee liberty. And anon he that made the Proclamation, went into euery place where such Proclamation should be made, and proclaimed, Exantus had giuen free liberty to Esop. And when this was done, Esop went into the midst of all the fellowship, and made a signe with his hand, that euery one should keep silence, and after said, My Lords of Samie, the Eagle which is king aboue all other birds, as the king is aboue the people, this bird hath taken away the effect and seale of your Governor: This betokeneth and signifieth, that a king shall ask and demand your liberty, and destroy your lawes. And when the Samians heard these words, they were abashed, and anon came the Purkuant with letters, and demanded after the signet of the Samians. The messenger was brought before the counsell of the towne, to whom he presented his letters, containing the sentence following. Crassus king of Lindians to the Senate and common people of Samy greeting, and commanding you, that you do to me obeysance, and pay me tributes, which if you refuse to doe, I shall put you to death and burne your towne. Whereat the Samians were much abashed, and

for feare willing to obey unto him. But neberthelesse, first they went to Esop, and prayed him to say thereof his minde. The which said: My Lords of samy, albeit that I would yee inclined to obey the King of Lindy, neberthelesse, to the intent that I may counsel you that which is needfull, and for the publike wealth and profit, I do you to know, that Fortune in this mortall life doth shew two things, and two manner of wayes: The one is liberty, whereof the beginning is hard and difficult, but the end of it is good & easie. The other part is servitude, whereof the beginning is easie, but the end therof is sharpe & bitter. And when the Samians heard these words, knowing that they tended to the good of the common wealth, they consented to take the advice of Esop, and said altogether, because that wee be in liberty, wee will not be servants unto any man: and with this answer sent againe the messenger to Crassus. And when y King heard this answer, he was wroth, & gathered all his men of war, and all the nobles of his realme, and prepared a great army to destroy the samians, The which thing he might haue brought about had not the messenger bin, which said unto him, Right deere sir, thou mayest not be auenged on the Samians so long as they haue Esop with them, which in all their affaires and deeds helpeth and counselleth them; wherefore it is necessary that thou send an Embassador unto the Samians, that they shall send thee Esop, and that thou wilt pardon and forgiue them their trespassse; for if thou mayest haue Esop, they of Samy be in thy hands. And the King suddenly sent Embassadors to them of Samy, the which Embassadors applyed and set ther witts, to shew unto the Senate of Samy the will of their Lord Crassus: and said that they should send Esop speedily unto him: and when Esop understood what the King demanded, he said to y Samians, my Lords, it pleaseth me well to go toward the King, but before I go I will tell you a fable.

How the Wolues sent their Embassadors
to the sheepe.

In time when beasts could speake, the Wolues made warre against the Sheepe, and because the Sheepe might not keepe them, nor hold against the Wolues, they demanded helpe of the Dogges, by the which the Sheepe made the Wolues to returne backward. And because the Wolues could nor might not get nor haue any prey, nor winne nothing vpon the sheepe, because of the dogs that kept them, the wolues on a time sent an Embassador vnto the sheepe, for to haue perpetuall peace with them: and for to haue peace, the Wolues went and demanded, that for to eschew all suspition, the Dogs should be giuen to the Wolues, or else destroyed for ever. And the Sheepe as fooles, in hope of peace and concord, consented to their demand. And when all the dogs were slaine, the wolues tooke vengeance vpon the sheepe, as dayly appeareth. When Esop rehearsed this fable, the samians determined among themselves, that Esop should not go toward the King.

How Esop obeyed not the Samians, but
went toward the King.

Esop obeyed not the will of the samians, but went with the Embassadors towards the King. And when he was come to the Kings court, the King seeing that Esop was so deformed, and crooked of body, he was angry and wrath with himselfe, and said with great maruail, Is this same he, for the trust of whom they of Samy would not obey vnto mee? Esop then said: Ah right deare Sir and King, certainly I am not come before thy Majestie by force, but of my good will I am come to thee, trusting so much vpon thy benignity, that thou wilt heare what I shall lay vnto thee.

The

The King gaue him audience, and leaue to say what he would, and thus he began : The other day there was a man which chased the flyes, the which man took a Nightingale, and the Nightingale seeing that he would haue killed her, said to the Falconer, I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay mee, for to no body do I any harme or danger, for I eat not the come, nor destroy the fruits of the earth, but giue solace and joy to all them that passe by the way with my song and voice, and of me shalt thou haue but only a little carkasse ; and when the Falconer heard the bird speake these words, he let her go. Wherefore (right beare Sir) I pray thee that thou without cause wilt not slay me, which am nought and nothing worth, for to no body I do harme, nor would I do. And for the defect and feeblenesse of my body I may not do, but I can speake and say things that be profitable to them that be in the morfall life of this present world. The King then maruelled and was moued to pittie, and said to Esop, I giue not vnto thee thy life, for fortune giueth it thee, and if thou wilt haue ought else of me, aske and it shall be giuen thee. Then Esop said, I aske nothing of thee but only that thou giue me the tribute of the Samians. Well said the King, I am content. Then Esop greatly thanked the King, and after that he composed the Fables which be written here in this booke, and to the King he gaue them, and demanded of him the letters of the gift, for the remission of the tribute of the Samians, the which were deliuered to him by the Kings commandement, and with his good will, and many other gifts : and Esop then tooke his leaue of the King, and returned to Samy.

How Esop returned to Samy againe.

After that Esop was arriued in Samie, the people receiued him worshipfully, and made great joy at his comming. And Esop commanded the people to be assembled together at a certain day in the place appointe

ed. And when as Esop was set in the seat, hee read unto them the royall Letters of King Crassus, how he remitted and forgaue them the tributes. After this Esop departed from amy, & would goe spozte himselfe through many Regions, nations, and cities, giving ensigment's by histories and fables unto mortall men. Amongst the rest he came to Babylon, and because he did shew there his wisdom, hee was received and worshipfully feasted of Lycure King of Babylon. At that time the Kings did send one to another playes and problematicks, and such other pleasant deuises for their disports: and he which could not interpret them, sent tribute to him that sent them. And because that Esop could interpret them, hee taught the King of Babylon the manner of it. After that he composed many fables, which the King of Babylon sent to other Kings, and because they could not interpret them, they sent many tributes unto him, whereby his whole realme was mightily enriched. After that because Esop had no young children, he adopted a noble child to be his sonne, the which he presented to the King: and he receiued him as if he had been his owne sonne, which child was named Enus. This Enus within a little while after medled with the chamberer of Esop, which he held for his wife, and euen knew her bodily, and because he was greatly in doubt that Esop would auenge himselfe, he accused Esop to the King of diuers crimes and high treason; he also composed false letters, shewing by them to the King, how Esop by fables which he sent here and there, had betrayed him, and that he had conspired his death.

How the King commanded that Esop should be put to death, and how he was saved.

The King Lycure belæuing and giuing credit to the accusation made against Esop, was uery wroth, & commanded Horope his Seneshall that Esop should be

he put to death. But Horope seeing that his sentence was uniuert, kept Esop secretly within a Sepulcher, & all his goods were giuen to his son which had accused him. Long after this Nectabanus King of Egypt, wening that Esop had certainly been put to death, according to the commandement, sent a proposition problematicke to Lycure King of Babylon, which was as followeth. Nectabanus King of Egypt sendeth greeting unto Lycure King of Babylon. Because I would edifie and build a tower the which shall not touch heauen nor earth, I pray thee send unto me Masons to make up the said tower: and this request being accomplished, I shall giue unto thee the tenth tribute of all my lands and realmes. And when the King of Babylon heard this demand, he was greatly troubled and wroth and thought how he might giue answer to this question. And when he had called all his sages, for to haue a resolution thereof, and found none that could declare y same, the King was more angry then he was before. And for the great sorrow that he tooke thereof, he fell downe to the ground and said: Alas I am miserable, & haue lost the crowne of my realme; cursed be hee, by whom I made Esop to be put to death. And when Horope the Seneschall knew the great anguish and sorrow of the King, he said to him: Right deere sir, take no more sorrow in thy heart, but pardon & forgiue me, for I made not Esop to be put to death as thou commandest me; for well I wist that yet thou shouldest haue need of him: & doubting to displease thy majesty, since that day to this I haue kept him in a sepulcher; when y King heard this he was very glad, and anon he rose from the ground where he lay, and went and embraced the Seneschall, saying, if it be so that Esop may be found alive, during my life I shall be bound to thee, and therefore I pray thee if it be so, let him come to me quickly.

How Eſop was brought before the King, and how the King commanded that he ſhould be put in his former office and dignitie againe.

Eſop being brought before the King, fell downe at the Kings feet. And when the King ſaw that Eſop looked ſo pale and ill, he had of him great pittie, and commanded that hee ſhould bee taken vp and newly cloathed. And when Eſop was vpon his feet, he came before the King, and full meekely ſaluted him, and demanded of him the cauſe why he had been put in priſon. Then the King ſaid, that his adopted ſonne Enus had accused him, and the King commanded that Enus ſhould be puniſhed with ſuch paine as thoſe deſerue that denie the death of their Fathers. But Eſop prayed the King he would forgive him. And when the King ſhelved Eſop the queſtion of the King of Egypt, and when Eſop had ſeen the Letter, he ſaid to the King, Write againe to the King of Egypt, and giue to him this anſwer: That after the winter ſhall be paſt and gone, thou ſhalt ſend vnto him workemen to build and make vp his Tower. And thus he ſent Embaſſadors to the King of Egypt. After this, the King made all the goods of Eſop to be reſtored vnto him, and he to be put in his firſt dignitie, giuing him full authoritie and might to puniſh his ſonne after his owne will. But Eſop benignly receiued againe into his houſe his adopted Sonne, and ſweetly chaſtiſed and corrected him, and ſaid: My ſonne, obſerue you my commandements, and keepe them in thy memozy: For we giue well counſaile to others, but for our ſelues we cannot take it: but becauſe thou art an humane man, thou muſt be ſubject to fortune: Wherefore thou ſhalt firſt loue God, and keep thy ſelfe from the wrath and anger of the King.

And becauſe that thou art an humane man, haue thy care and ſollicitude on humane things, for **G D D** doth

doth punish the wicked folke : also it is no good or heavenly thing to do any body harme, but shew thy selfe cruell to those that are thine enemies, to the end that of them thou be not condemned : and to freinds make joyfull semblance and good cheere, to the end that thou maiest haue the more assurance of their help and good will ; for thou oughtest to desire prosperity and welfare to thy freinds, and aduersity to all thine enemies. Thou maiest speake fair to thy wife, to the intent that she take not another man ; because a woman is variable, and as men flatter and speake faire to her, she is lesse inclined to do any euill. Keepe thee well from the fellowship of the cruell man : for albeit that he haue good prosperity, yet he is miserable. Stop thy eares, and hold well thy tongue from much talking, and haue no enuy at other mens goods, for enuy hindreth the envious. Haue care and regard ouer thy family, and that thou maiest be loued like a Lord, haue shame in thy selfe to do any thing against reason, and be negligent or wretches to learn every day. Tel not thy counsell to thy wife, spend no, waste not thy goods wilfully, for better it is to a man to leaue his goods after his death, then to be a begger in his life; salute joyfully such as thou meetest by the way. For the dog maketh signe of joy with his taile to such as he knoweth by the way. Dock no man, neuer hide thy wisdom, and all that thou borrowest giue againe with good will : and those which thou maiest help, refuse not to do good to keepe thee from euil company : shew to thy freinds thy affaires and businesse, and beware that thou do nothing whereby thou maiest repent thee after ward; and when aduersitie commeth heare it patiently. Harbour them that be harbourlesse, cloathe the naked. A good word appeareth anger. Surely he is happy that may get him a good freind : for nothing is so secretly kept but one time or other it will come to light.

[How Enus departed from Esope, and went
and killed himselfe.

THUS with many admonitions did Esope instruct his
sonne, and Enus departed and said, that uniuersally and
without cause he hath accused Esope, for which he was
full of heavinesse and sorrow, and went up to the top of
a high mountaine, and from thence cast himselfe down
to the bottome: and thus wilfully he brake his bones
and killed himselfe, as hee had euer kept euill rule and
misgovernance: for of an euill life cometh an euill end.
After this, Esope commanded the Faulconers that they
should take foure young Eagles which were not yet
forth of their nest. And when Esope had them, he accusto-
med them to eate their meate high and low, and each
of them had to their feet two children fastened & bound;
and as the children lift upward, made their meate to
come downward, the young Eagles likewise followed
up and downe to take their meat.

These things thus ordered, and Winter being gone
and past, Esope tooke leaue of King Lycure, and with
his Eagles and children went into Egypt, and when he
was come before the King, the King seeing Esope so de-
formed and crooke-backed, thought in himselfe that he
was but a beast, and that the King of Babylon mocked
him and his person: for he considered not that a foule
bessell might be full of good wine. For men ought not
only to take heed of the vessell, but to that which is in it.
Esope then presently kneeled before the King, and right
humbly saluted him, and the King sitting in his Maiesty
saluted him right graciously & benignly, saying in this
manner, How likest thou me and mine? And Esope an-
swered, Sir thou seemest to me to be the Sunne, and
thy men the beames thereof.

How

How *Esop* made solution to the King of Egypt,
upon the question which he sent
to the King of
Babylon.

THe King having heard the answer of *Esop*, greatly
marvailed that he was so subtile in his answers, and
said to him in this manner, Hast thou brought with thee
all them that shall edifie & make up my Tower? I haue
sayd *Esop*. But first thou must shew unto me the place
whereas thou wilt haue it. The King then departed
out of the place, and set *Esop* in a faire field, and said,
seest thou this fair field: it is the place where I would
haue my tower. *Esop* then to each corner of this field
laid an Eagle with two children. The children held
the meat upward in the ayre, and the Eagles began to
fly after it. And when the children with an high voice
began to cry, saying: Bring us now clay, stone, bricke,
wood, and tiles, and we shall build up the Tower. And
when the King saw this, he said to *Esop*, as by great
admiration: What, haue you men in your land which
haue wings: and *Esop* said, yea, we haue many such.
Then said the King to *Esop*, thou hast vanquished me by
thy reasons and words. But I pray thee answer me
unto this question. I haue made mares to be brought
to me out of Greece, and they haue conceived and bare
horses by the helpe of the horses of Babylon. And *Esop*
then answered him, Sir, to morrow I shall giue you
an answer unto this question. And after that *Esop*,
was returned to his lodging, he said in this manner to
his servants: Looke that among you yee get me a great
Cat, and the servants accomplished the will of *Esop*.
Then

Then Esop openly before y^e folkes made y^e Cat to be beaten with rods: as the Egyptians saw this, they ran anon after the Cat to haue taken him, but they might not: which feat done, the Egyptians went and told the King thereof. And anon the King commanded that Esop should be brought before his person. And when Esop was come, the King said unto him: Come hither, what hast thou done? wottest thou not that the God that is adored and worshipped of vs, is of the figure and lykenesse of a Cat; For certayne all the Egyptians worship and adore the Idole made after the form and figure of a Cat, wherefore hast thou greatly offended. And Esop said thus unto the King: Sir, this false and euill beast, on the night last past, offended against the King of Babylon, for this beast hath slain a cock which he much loved, because he fought so strongly, and lung on the houres of the night. And the King said, Esop, I should neuer haue thought that thou wouldest haue made so great a leasing before me. For it may not be that this Cat should haue gone and come in a night from hence to Babylon. And Esop smiling said to him, Sir, in such manner cometh and goeth to Babylon horses; which the mares brought out of Greece conceived, and bare young horses. And the King hearing this, praised greatly the wisdom of Esop, and then the King made more of him, and more worshipped him then before. And on the morrow after, the King of Egypt made all the chiefeest and greatest of the Philosophers, and wisest men in all the countrey to be called before him, the which he informed of the great subtilty and wit of Esop, and commanded them to supper into his Court with Esop. Then they being set at the table, one of them said thus to Esop, thou must pardon me, for hither am I sent to speak with thee: and Esop said, for what it plealeth thee: and he said, It is Gods will that no man should make any leasings. And after, another said unto Esop there is a great temple

ple in the which is a Colunne right great, the which Colunne beareth and sustaineth twelve Cities, and every Citie is covered with xxx great sayles, vpon the which two women be ever running. And Esop answered him in this manner, The small and litle children in Babilon, knew the solution of this question: For this temple whereof thou speakest is Heauen, & the colunne is y^e Earth; the xii. Cities be the xii. monthes of y^e y^eer, & the xxx. sayles be the dayes of the moneths, and the two women which be ever running ouer these sayles, is the day and the night. Then said the King of Egypt to the Lords of his Court, it is now right and reason, that I doe send gifts and tributes to the King of Babilon. And one of them said to the King, Sir, we must yet make to him an other question, which is this. What is that we neuer heard nor saw? And the King prayed Esop to giue solution to this question. And Esop went to his lodging, & framed to make an Obligation, on the which he made to be written this that followeth. I Mactabanus King of Egypt, make known to all men, that I borrowed of King Lycure a thousand mark of gold, which I Mactabanus promised to pay to the said King Lycure within a certain time, (which then was past :) this writing did Esop present on the morrow following to the King of Egypt, which greatly marvelled thereat, and said to the Noble men of his Court that were there present, have you seen or ever heard say, that the King Lycure hath lent to me any money or other thing? And as the Lords said nay, Esop then said to them: if it be as ye say, then your question is answered, for now you heare and see that which you neuer heard nor saw. And then they of Egypt said, that King Lycure was happy & fortunate to have such a subject & servant as Esop was, and the King sent Esop again vnto Babilon with great gifts, and tributes for the King of Babilon,

How Esop returned into Babylon, and how the King caused a statue or image of gold to be set up in honour of him.

After Esop was come again before the King of Babylon, he rehearsed to him all he had done in Egypt. Wherefore the King commanded that in the worship of Esop, a Statue or image of gold should be set up in the publique or common place; within a while after, Esop had a great desire to go into Greece, and asked leave of the King to goe thither, whereof the King was sorrowfull, and Esop promised him that he would return into Babylon, and there hee would live and die with him: and thus the King granted to him leave. And as Esop travelled through all the Cities of Greece with worship, he shewed his Sapience and Fables, in such wise that he got worship and glory, and was renowned through all the land of Greece. At the last he came to the land of Delphi, which was the best Province in all Greece. The Citizens then of the City of Delphi, by their envie mocked and dishonoured Esop, and Esop said unto them: My Lords, ye be like the wood which is carried on the Sea; for when men see it afar off, being tossed with the waues, it seemes to be right great, but when men be neer, it appeareth but a small thing. Thus is it of you; for when I was farre from you, I weened that you had bin the best of all the land, and now I know that ye be the worst. And when the Delphines heard these words, they held a councell together, and one of them said: Most wise Lords, ye know very well how that this man hath had great glory in all the Cities & places where he hath bin, wherefore if we take no heed to our selves, he will rob vs of our great authority, & destroy us. When they imagined how & in what manner they might put him to death, but they durst not attempt it for the great company of strangers

Strangers that were then within the Citie. Nevertheless, as they espied one of the servants of Esop making the males and other gear ready to ride and depart thence; they went and took a cup of gold out of the temple of Apollo, and secretly put it into the male of Esop. Esop being ignorant here of, departed from Delphi; but ere he was far, the traytors ran after, making great noyse and clamour. And Esop said to them, my Lords, why take ye me? And they said, ah thief of celestiall ornaments, crooke-backed and sacrilegious, wherefore hast thou despised and robbed the Temple of Apollo?

How Esop was betrayed, and how he rehearsed
to the Delphines the Fable of the
Rat and the Frogge.

Esop hearing this, denyed it. And forthwith they unbund the male, within the which they found the cup of gold: and they went and shewed it before the people. And Esop considering add seeing their malice and wickednesse, and knowing that he could not escape, began to weep & to be sorrowfull for his fortune. And one of his friends, named Demas, seeing Esop thus weeping, comforted him, saying thus, take good courage and rejoyce thy self. And anon the Delphines went and concluded, that they (as a sacriledger worthy to receiue a villanous kind of death) should take Esop, and cause him to be led to the top of an high Mountaine, for to be thowne downe from thence head-long. When Esop knew their Sentence, he rehearsed to them this fable, for to withdrawe them from their malice, saying. When peace was among all beastes, the Ratte and the Frogge loved much each other, and the Rat called the Frogge to come to dine with her. The Ratte said unto the Frogge, eat of the meate which pleaseth thee best. And when they had eaten enough, the Frog said to the Rat: come with me;
and

and thou shalt fare well at thy supper: & to y^e end thou mayest the better passe y^e river, thou shalt bind thy self to my foote. The Kat agreed & anon y^e Frog leapt into the water, & drewe the Kat after her. And as the Kat was neer drowned, he said to y^e Frog, Wrongfully thou makest me to suffer death, but they y^e abide alive shall avenge this misdoed on thee. And as they were thus drawing, the one forward and the other backward, a Kite seeing the debate and strife between them, toke them both together and ate them up. In like manner ye make me die wrongfully: But Babylon and Greece shall avenge me upon you. But yet for all this the Delphines would not let Esop goe, but instead of death they drewe and pulled him shrewdly, and in the best maner he could, he defended himself against them.

How Esop dyed miserably.

AND as Esop was thus fighting against them, he escaped out of their hands, and fled into the Temple of Apollo, but all that profited him nothing, for by force and strength they drewe him forth of the Temple, and then they led him wheresoever they ment to put him to death. And Esop seeing himself so hampered said unto them: My Lords dread you not your God Apollo: he shall avenge me on you. Yet notwithstanding for all he could say, they brought him to the place where he should dye: and seeing he could not escape from them, he began to them this Fable. There was a woman had a daughter which was a virgin and sole: the mother prayed unto her Gods, that they would give to her daughter wit & reason. Her daughter was once in the Temple, and heard what she said in her prayers: and anon Shee went into the field, and saw a man which filled a sack full of corn; she came and asked him what he did, & he said, fair daughter, I put wit into this sack: and she said again, alas my friend, I pray thee putt some wit into my body, my mother shall pay thee well for thy labour. Then he toke her
and

and put his wit into her belly, and tooke her maiden-head from her : and full glad she returned home to her mother, and said to her, Mother, I have found a faire young man which hath put wit into me : and her mother hearing these words, wared full of sorrow, and said : My daughter, thou hast recovered all thy wit, but the wit which thou hadst thou hast lost. Likewise to them he rehearsed another fable ; There was a husbandman which from his youth to his old age had never bin in the fields, nor never came into any City ; he prayed his master that he might once see the City, and they sent him in a cart which was drawn with Asses, and said to him, prick well the Asses, and they shall lead thee to the City : and after he had pricked them, there arose a great tempest, wherewith the Asses were sore fouled, so that they left their way, and tooke another way, and drew the cart upon a mountain top, so that both he and the cart fell down to the foote of the hill. And as he saw himself falling, he said to Jupiter on this manner, Ah Jupiter, if I offend thee, must I therefore die so miserably ? I am more grieved at those foul and inutile Asses by whom I must receive death, then if they were fair and good horses. Even so it fareth with me, for of good men and iust I should not be put to death, but of you which are evill. And as they were come to the place for to cast down Esop, he told them another fable in this manner. A certain man was enamored of his daughter, whom by force he desfloured, and she said unto her father, ah father, thou art an evill man, that hast done to me such a shame ; for rather should I have suffered this crime of an hundred other men then of thee : semblably it is of me, for I had rather suffer death of other men then of you. So they threw him from the top of the hill, and thus he died miserably.

How the Delphines sacrificed to their Gods, edified a Temple for to please them for the death of Esop.

After, when Esop was put to death, it fell that in their City ran a great pestilence and famine, insomuch that they lost all their wits, and for this cause they sacrificed to their God Apollo, to the end to please him for the death of Esop, and because that uniuersally and wrongfully, they put him to death, they made and edified a temple, and when the Princes and great Lords of Greece had tidings how the Delphines had put Esop to death, they came to Delph to punish them that had put Esop to death.

Thus endeth the Life of Esop.

Here beginneth the Prologue of the first Booke.

Romulus the sonne of Tiber of the Citie of Antique, greeting. Esop a man of Greece, subtile and ingenious teacheth in his Fables how men ought to govern themselves. And to the end that we might shew the life and customes of all manner of men, he induceth the Birds, the Trees, and the Beasts speaking: to the end that man may know wherefore the Fables were found; in the which he hath written the malice of evill people, and the arguments of improbes. He teacheth also to be humble, and for to use good words, and many other faire examples, rehearsed and declared hereafter, The which I Romulus have translated out of Greeke into Latine, which if you reade, they shall sharpen thy wit, and give thee cause of ioy and mirth.

The first Fable of the Cock and the precious stone.

As a Cock once did seek his living in the dunghill, he found a precious stone, to whom the Cock said, Ha faire stone and precious, thou art here in the filth; and if he that desireth thee had found thee as I have done, he would have taken thee up, and set thee in thy first estate; but I in vain have found thee, for nothing have

have I to doe with thee, ne good may I doe to thee, ne thou to me. And this Fable Esop propoſeth to them that read this Booke: for by the Cock is underſtood a ſoule, which careth for no more wiſdome, then the Cock did for the precious ſtone: and by this ſtone, is underſtood this booke.

Of the Wolf and the Lamb.

Of the innocent and of the ſhrew, Esop rehearſeth this Fable. It was ſo that a Lamb and Wolfe both had thirſt, and went both to the river to drinke, the Wolfe drank above, and the Lamb beneath: and as the Wolfe ſaw the Lamb drinke, he ſaith with an high voice, knowe why haſt thou troubled my water ſo I ſhould now drinke of: Ah my Lord, ſaving your grace, the water commeth from you toward me. Then ſaid the Wolfe, haſt thou no ſhame ne dread to curſe me: The Lamb ſaid my Lord, by your leave. Then ſaid the Wolfe again: It is not ſix weeks paſt ſince thy father did as much. And the Lamb ſaid I was not then boꝝn. And the Wolfe ſaid again: Thou haſt eaten my father. The Lamb ſaid I have no teeth. Then ſaid the Wolfe ſaid, thou art well like thy father, and for this ſinne and miſdeed thou ſhalt dye. This Fable ſheweth, that the evill man careth not by what manner he may rob and deſtroy the good innocent man.

Of the Rat and the Frogge.

Now it was ſo, that the Rat went on pilgrimage, and came by a River, and demanded help of the Frogge for to paſſe over, and then the Frog bound the Rats foot to her foot, & ſwam in the mids of the River; and as they were there, the Frog abode ſtill, with an intent to drown the Rat. In the mean while, a Witte perceivving it, took them both away. Wherefore that man that thinketh deceit, deceit ſhall come to him.

Of the Dog and the Sheep,

Of quarrellers which be ever ſeeking occaſion to do ſome harm to the good, Esop ſeteth us this Fable.

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There

There was sometimes a Dog which demanded of a Sheep a loaf of bread that he had borrowed of him. The Sheep answered, that he never borrowed any of him. The Dog made her to answer it before a Judge. And because the Sheep denied the debt, the Dogge brought with him false witnessse, to wit, the Wolfe, the Kite, and the Sparhawk. When the witnesses should be examined and heard, the Wolfe said to the Judge, I am certain, and remember well that the Dog lent her a loafe of breade: the Kite said, she receiued it to present my person: and the Sparhawk said to the Sheep, why deniest thou that which thou hast taken and receiued: thus was the poore Sheep vanquished. Wherefore the Judge commanded her that she should pay the Dog, and to that end, she should do alway before Winter her fleece of wool to pay the same. Thus was the poore Sheep despoiled. In such manner the evil and hungry people by their great unthankfulnesse rob and spoyle poore folkes.

Of the Dog and the peece of flesh.

HE that coveteth other mens goods, he oft loseth his his own, whereof Esop rehearseth this Fable. In time past there was a Dog which went over a bridge, and held in his mouth a peece of flesh, and as he passed over the bridge, he perceived the shadow of his owne selfe, and of his peece of flesh within the water: and he knowing that it had bin another peece of flesh, forthwith he thought to have taken it: and as he opened his mouth, the flesh fell into the water, and thus he lost it. Right so is it with many a one, for when they think to rob other, they lose that they have of their own.

Of the Cow, the Goat, and the Sheepe.

IT is accounted for a common saying among men, that the servant should not presume to eat any plums with his Lord. For to the poore it is not good to have partage and division with him that is rich and mightie; wherefore Esop rehearseth such a Fable. The

The Cow, the Goat; and the Sheepe, went once a hunting, and chased a Hart, and tooke out with them the Lion, and when they came to part it the Lion said, My Lords, I let you to wit, that the first part is mine, because I am your Lord: the second because I am stronger then ye be: the third, because I ran more swiftly then ye did: and whosoever toucheth the fourth part shall be my mortall enemy. And thus he tooke from them the Hart. Wherefore this fable sheweth that the poore should not keep fellowship with the mighty, for he is never faithfull to the poore.

Of the theefe and the Sunne.

NO man is changed by nature, but an evill man may well have a worse issue then his himself. Esop hereof telleth vs a fable. A theef held, the feast of his wedding, and his neighbours came where the feast was kept, and did worship to the theefe: and a wise man seeing that the neighbours of the theefe were joyfull and glad, said to them, Ye make you mirth and gladnesse of that whereof ye should weep? take heed to my words, and understand your ioy. The Sun would once be married, but all the Nations of the world were against him, and prayed Iupiter that hee should keep the Sun from wedding. Then Iupiter demanded of them the cause why they would not have him to be married: one of them said to Iupiter, thou knowest well there is but one Sunne; and yet he burneth vs all, and if he be married and have any children, they shall destroy all mankind: therefore this fable sheweth that we ought not to reioyce when we are in evill company.

Of the Wolfe and the Crane.

HE that doth any good to an evill man, sinneth as Esop saith, for of the good done to the evill, cometh no profit; wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. A Wolfe ate and deuoured a sheepe, of whose bones he had one in his throat, which he could not get out, and soze it grieved him. Wherefore the Wolfe pray-

ed the Crane, that he would draw out of his throat the bone. And the Crane put downe his long neck into his throat, and drew out the bone, whereby the Wolfe was whole. Then the Crane demanded of him her reward, and the Wolfe answered, thou art right unkind and canst no good; remembreth thou not what I might have done to thee? for when thou haddest thy necke within my throat, if I would I might have bit it off. By this fable it appeareth that no good comes from an evill body.

Of two Bitches, how one lodged the other
in time of littering

BE not hasty to giue credit to the tales of flatterers, for by sweet words they deceiue good people, wherof Esop telleth us this fable. There was a Bitch upon a time, which would faine litter and be deliuered of her young ones, and came to the habitation of another Bitch, and prayed her by sweet words that she would lend her a place where she might litter her young ones. And that other Bitch lent to her her bed and her house, weening that shee had therein done well. And when the Bitch had littered, the good Bitch said to her, that it was time that she should goe and depart out of her house; and then the other Bitch and her young doggs ran upon her and bit her, and cast her forth of her owne house. In this manner many a one for doing good hath hurt and dammage.

Of the man and the Serpent.

There is no good gotten by helping an euill person, for he that helpeth such, shall surely be ill rewarded for his labour: and he that saueth a theefe from the galloves prouideth an enemy for himselfe: wherfore to withstand such, Esop reherbeth to us this fable. There was sometime a man which found a Serpent within a Vine, and by reason of the great frost in the Winter, the Serpent was hard and almost dead for cold, wherfore the good man pittied her, and tooke her up, and bare

bare her into his house, and laid her befoze the fire, insomuch that shee came againe to her former strength & vigour. And as soone as shee was thus rebited, shee began to cry and hisse about the house, and to trouble the good wife and her children. Wherefoze the good man would have had her out of y^e house: but when he thought to have taken her, shee sprung about his necke and had almost strangled him. Even so it fareth with them that doe good to wicked people, for instead of love and kinnesse they shall have malice and envy.

Of the Lion and the Asse

OF them that mock others, Esop rehearseth this fable. There was an Asse which met with a Lion, to whom he said: My brother, God save thee; and the Lion shaked his head, and had great paine to with-hold his courage from deuouring the Asse. But the Lion said to himselfe, It behobeth not the teeth of so noble a Lord as I am, to bite such a foule beast. For he that is wise must not hurt the fowle, nor heed his words, but let him goe.

Of two Rats.

FArre better is it to liue in poverty, than to liue richly being euer in danger: whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There were two Rats, whereof one was great and fat, and held him in the celler of a rich man, and the other was poore and leane. On a day this great Ratt went to sport him in the field, and met by the way the leane Ratt, of the which he was receiued as well as he could into his poore cave or hole, and gaue him of such meat as he had. Then said the fat Rat, come thou with mee, and I shall giue thee other meat. He went with him into the Tower, & both entred into the rich mans celler, which was full of goods, and when they were there, the great Rat presented and gaue to the poore Rat diuers dainty meats, saying unto him: Be merry

and make good chere; and as they were thus ioyfully eating, the butler came into the celler, and the great Kat ran into his hole, but y^e poo^r Kat wist not whither to flie, but hid him behind the doo^r with great fear and trembling, and the butler turned againe and saw him not. And when he was gone, the fat Kat came out of his hole, & called the leane Kat, which was yet in feare and said: Come hither, and feare not to fill thy belly: but the poo^r Kat said, for very lobe let me goe, for I had rather eat corne in the field and live securely, then to eat dainty fare in such feare as thou dost here in this place. And therefore it is better to live poo^rly & surely, than to live richly and without assurance.

Of the Eagle and the Fox.

THe puissant and mighty must doubt the feeble, as Esop rehearseth to us a fable. There was an Eagle which came where young fores were, & took away one of them, & gave it to his young eagles to feed them with. The Fox went after him and prayed him to restore it againe: But the Eagle said he would not, for he was over him Lord and Master: Then the Fox full of subtilty & malice, began to put together a great abundance of straw, and laid it under the tree where the Eagle and her young birds were, and kindled it with fire, and when the smoake and the flame began to rise upward, y^e Eagle fearing the death of his young birds, restored to the Fox her young one.

Of the Eagle and the Raven.

HE that is well and surely garnished, yet by false counsell may be betrayed, as Esop telleth us such a fable. An Eagle was sometime upon a tree, which held in his bill a nut which he could not breake: the Raven came unto him and said, thou shalt never break it untill thou fly as high as thou canst, and then let it fall upon the stones; and the Eagle did so, and by that meanes lost his Nut. Thus many have beene deceived through false counsell.

Of the Raven and the Foxe.

They that be glad and joyfull at the praising of flatterers, oftentimes doe repent them; whereof Esop rehearseth to us this Fable. A Raven which was upon a tree, held in his bill a peece of chæse, which the Fox desired much to have: wherefore he went and praised him in this manner, O gentle Raven, thou art the gentlest of al other birds, for thy feathers be so fair, so bright, and shining, & thou canst also wel sing; if thou hadst thy voice cleare, and small, thou wouldest be the most happy of all other birds. The fowle which heard the flattering words of the Fox, began to open his bill to sing, and then the chæse fell to the ground, & the Fox tooke it up & eat it. And when the Raven saw that for his owne glory he was deceived, hee waxed heavy and sorrowfull, and it repented him that he had beleev'd the Fox. Wherefore this fable teacheth us, that wee ought not to be glad or rejoyce in the words of false and unfaithfull folke, nor to beleeye flatterers.

Of the Lion, the wild Bore, the Bull
and the Asse.

When a man hath lost his dignity or office, he must leave his audacity or hardnesse, to the end that hee bee not hurt and mocked. Wherefore Esop sheweth such a fable. There was a Lion which in his youth was very fierce and cruell, and when he was come to age, there came to him a wild Bore, which with his teeth rent and burst a great peece of his body and avenged the wrong that the Lion had done to him before time. After came unto him a Bull which smote and hurt him with his homes: also an Asse came, which smote him in the forehead with her feet in most scornfull manner. And then the Lion began to weepe, saying within himselfe in this manner: When I was young

young and strong, every one dreaded and doubted mee: but now I am old, feeble, and neare my death, none setteth ought by me, but of euery one I am abused: And because that I haue lost my vigour & strength, I haue also lost my dignity and worship. Therefore this fable sheweth how we must be meek in prosperity, lest we be scorned of all men in our aduersity.

Of the Asse and the young Dogge.

NO man ought to meddle with that which hee cannot doe. Wherefore Esop rehearseth such a fable, of an Asse which was in the house of a Lord, which had a little Dog which he loved well, and eate upon his table. And the little dog fawned and leapt upon his gown, & to all them that were in the house he shewed his loue: wherefore the Asse was envious, and said in himselfe, If my Lord and his seruants love this miscreant beast that sheweth his love towards them, by all reason they must love me if I shew kindnesse towards them; and therefore from henceforth I will take my disport, and make ioy and play with my Lord and his seruants. And as the Asse was in his thought and imagination, it happened that he saw his Lord entering into y^e house; The Asse began to dance: and to make cheere, & to sing with his sweet voyce: and approaching toward his Lord, leapt upon his shoulder, and began to kisse and lick him. The Lord then began to cry out with a loud voice and said, Yet this foule whoreson that hurteth me so sore be well beaten and put away. Then the Lords seruants took great stauies, and began to smite upon the poore Asse, and beat him soze that he had no more courage to dance or leape upon his Master.

Of the Lion and the Rat,

THe mighty and puissant must forgive the feeble, for oft the little may well giue aide and helpe unto the great; whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, of a Lion which slept in a forrest, and the Rats disporting them about him, it happened that they went upon the
Lion,

Lion, whereat he awaked, and with his claw he tooke one of them; When the Kat saw her selfe thus taken, shee said unto the Lion: My Lord I pray you pardon me, for little shall you winne by my death, & I thought not to displease you. Then thought the Lyon with himselfe, that it were no worship to put her to death; wherfore he forgaue her and let her goe. After this, it hapned that the same Lion was taken in a snare, whereupon he began to cry and make sorrow: and when the Kat heard him cry, he appoched, and demanded what he ayled: And the Lion said: Seest thou how I am taken and bound with this line: Then said the Kat, My Lord I wil not be unkind, but shal ever remember your great mercy toward me, and withall, if I can, I shall now helpe you. The Kat then began to bite the cord, and so long knawed thereon, that the cord brake in sunder, and the Lion escaped.

Therefore this fable teacheth, how that a mighty man ought not to despise the little or meane, for he that cannot hurt by his strength, may give helpe by his diligent endcavouir.

Of the young Kite and his Mother,

HE that ever doth evil, ought not to have trust that his prayer should be heard.: Of which matter Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Kite which was sicke, insomuch that he had no trust to recover his health. And as he saw himself weake add feeble, he prayed his mother that shee would pray unto her gods for him. His mother answered him, My son, thou hast greatly offended and blasphemed the gods that now they will avenge them on thee, for thou prayest not to them for pittie nor loue, but for feare and dread; for he which leadeth an evil life, and in his dealing is obstinate, ought not to haue hope to be deliuered of his evil. For when one is fallen into extreme sicknesse, then is the time come that he must be paid according to his deeds: for that he offendeth other in his prosperity, shall finde

find few friends when he falleth into aduersity.

Of the Swallow and other birds.

HE that belæveth not good counsell, shall not faile to be evill counselled; wherefore Esop rehearseth to us this fable following. A Plow-man sowed Linseed, and the Swallow seeing that of the same Linseed, men might have nets and gins, went and said to all other birds; Come y^e all with me, and let us pluck up this; for if we let it grow, the labourer shall make gins and nets to take us all: but all the birds dispraised her counsell. Then the Swallow seeing this, went and harboured her self in the Plow-mans house. And when the flax was growne and pulled up, the labourer made gins and nets to take birds, wherewith he tooke every day divers of those birds, and brought them home to his house. Which the Swallow seeing, said, I told you of this before, but you would not be warned by me.

The end of the first Booke,

The Prologue of the second Booke.

ALL manner of fables are found to shew men what they should ensue and follow, and also what they ought to leave and flee; for fable is as much to say in Poetry, as words in Theologie. And therefore I wrote Fables, to shew the good conditions of good men: for the Law is given for trespassers and misdoers: & because the good and iust be not subiect to the Law, as we finde and reade of the Athenians which living after the law of Nature, & also at their liberty, would needs have a king for to punish all evill; but because they were not accustomed to be enformed, when any of them was corrected and punished, they were greatly troubled when the new king executed any Justice: because that afore that time they had never been under any mans subjection, it was grievous to them to be in servitude, wherefore they were sorrowfull that ever they

they had demanded any King. Against the which Esop reherſeth this fable following.

The First Fable is of the Frogges
and of Iupiter.

Nothing is ſo good as to live iuſtly and at liberty; for freedom and liberty is better then any gold or ſilver: whereof Esop reherſeth ſuch a fable: Divers frogs were in ditches and ponds at there own liberty, they altogether with one conſent made requeſt unto Iupiter, that he would give them a King, and Iupiter thereof began to marnell, and for their King he caſt them downe a great peece of wood, which with the fall thereof made a great ſound in the water, whereof they had great dread & feare; & after as they approached to their King for to make him obeysance, & perceivd that it was but a peece of wood, they turned againe to Iupiter, praying him earneſtly that he would give to them another King. Then Iupiter gave to them the Heron to bee their King. Then the Heron entred into the water, and eat them one after another. And when the Frogs ſaw that their King did ſo deboure them, they began to weepe to Iupiter, and to ſay unto him: Right high and mighty Iupiter, we pray thee to deliver us from the throat of this Tyrant, which eateth us one after another. And then ſaid Iupiter to them, the King which ye have demanded ſhall be your Maſter. Wherefore when men have that which is convenient, they ought to be ioyfull and glad, and he that hath liberty, ought to keep it well; for nothing is better than liberty, for liberty ſhould not be ſold for all the gold and ſilver in the world.

Of the Doves, the Kite, and the Sparhawke.

HEE that putteth himſelfe under the ſafegard or protection of the evill, ſhall aſke helpe of them in time of need, and get none, according to this preſent fable

fable of the Doves which requested a Sparhawk to be their king, for to keep them from the kite, and when the Sparhawk was made king over them, he began to desire them: Then y^e Doves said among themselves that better it were for us to suffer of the kite, than to be subjects unto the Sparhawk, & to be martyred as we be, but hereof we be well worthy, for we our selves are the onely cause of this mischance. Wherefore it is good wisdom for men to thinke well what will be the end, ere they begin any thing.

Of the Theefe and the Dog.

If a man give any thing, he that receiveth it, ought to take heed to what end it is given; whereof Esope rehearseth this fable. There was a theefe that came one night into a mans house for to have robbed him, and the good mans Dogg began to barke at him, and then the theefe did cast at him a peece of bread: and then the dog said to him: thou castest this bread for no good wil, but onely to the end that I should hold my peace, to the intent that thou mayest rob my Master; and therefore it were not good for me, that for a morsell of bread I should loose my life; wherefore goe thy way, or else I will awake my Master and all his household. The dog then began to barke, and the theefe fled: and thus by couetousnesse many haue received great gifts, which haue caused them to lose their heads. Wherefore it is good to consider, and looke well to what intent the gift is given, to the end that none may be betrayed by gifts, neither ought any for gifts to worke treason.

Of the Wolfe and the Sow.

A Man ought not to beleue all that he heareth; whereof Esope rehearseth such a fable, of a Wolfe which came towards a Sow, which kept and made sorrow for the great paine that she felt, because she was great with Pig. And the Wolfe came to her, saying, my sister, make the young pigs secure: for
ioyfully

ioyfully and with good will I shall serue and help thee. And the Sow then said to him, go forth on thy way, for I haue no need of the help of such a seruant : for as long as thou shalt stand here, I shall not deliuer me of my charge: for thou desirest nothing else but to haue them and eate them. The Wolfe then went his way, and anone the Sow was deliuered of her pigs: but if she had beleued him, she had had a sorrowfull birth. And thus he that foolishly beleueneth, foolishly it hapneth to him.

Of the Mountaine that shooke.

Right so it hapneth, that he that shaketh, hath dread and is fearefull ; whereof Esop rehearseth vnto vs such a fable of a hill which began to tremble and shake, because of the Mole that delued. And as the folke saw that the earth began to shake, they were sore afraid, and durst not come nigh the mountaine, but when they knew it was long of the Mole, their doubt and dread was turned to ioy, and they began all to laugh. Therefore men ought not to beleue all folke which be full of great words : for some men will greatly feare where no danger is.

Of the Wolfe and the Lambe.

The birth causeth not a man so much to get some freinds, as doth the goodnesse, whereof Esop rehearseth to vs such a fable, of a Wolfe which saw a Lambe among a great heard of Goates, the which Lambe sucked a Goate, and the Wolfe said to him, this Goate is not thy mother, goe and seeke her at the mountaine, for shee shall nourish thee more sweetly and more tenderly then the Goate will : and the Lambe answered him : This Goate nourisheth me instead of my mother, for she lendeth to me her paps sooner then to any of her owne children, and yet more better it is for me to be here among these
goats

Coates, than to depart from hence, and to fall into thy throat and be deuoured. Therefore he is a foole, which being in freedom or surety, putteth himselfe in danger of death: for better it is to liue hardly in surety, than sweetly in perill and danger.

Of the old Dog, and his Master.

Men ought not to dispraise the ancient, nor to put them backe; for if thou be young, thou oughtest to desire greatly to come to be old, also thou oughtest to praise the acts or deeds, which they haue done in their young age, whereof Esop rehearseth to us such a fable. There was a Lord which had a dog, the which in his youth had been of good kind: as namely to chase and hunt, and to haue great lust to runne and take the wild beasts. And when this dog was come to old age, and that he could no more run, it hapned once that he let goe and escaped from him a Hare, wherefore his Master was wroth and angry; and in great rage began to beat him. Then said the Dogge unto him, My Master, for good seruice thou yeeldest me euill: for in my young age, and prosperity, I serued thee right well; and now that I am come to my old age, thou hatest and settest me backe. Remember, I pray thee how that in my young age I was strong and lusty: and now when I am old and feeble, thou settest nothing by me. Therefore, whoso doth any good in his youth, in his old age he shall not continue in the vertues which he possessed in his youth.

Of the Hares, and the Frogs.

Men say commonly, that as the time goeth, so much folkes goe; whereof Esop rehearseth such a fable, that he which beholdeth the euil of other, must haue patience of the euill which may come upon himselfe. For sometimes as a hunter chased through the fields and wood, the Hares began to flee for feare, and as they ran, they passed through a meadow full of frogs, and when the frogs saw the Hares run, they began

gan also to run and flee as fast. The one of the Hares seeing them so fearefull, said to his fellows: let us be no more so fearefull, for we be not alone in dread, but all these frogs be in doubt as well as we: therefore we ought not to dispaire, but trust and hope to live, and if a little aduersity come upon us, we must endeavour to bear it patiently, for the time will one day come, that we shall be out of all feare & danger. Therefore in the unhappy and unfortunate time, men ought not to distrust, but ever to be in hope, that a time of better hap will come: even as peace cometh after war, and fair weather after raine.

Of the Wolfe and the Kid.

God children ought to keepe the commandements of their parents and friends, whercof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Goate which had littered her young kid; And hunger took her, so that shee would haue gone into the fields for to haue eaten some grasse; wherefore shee said to her young kid, My child, beware that if the Wolfe come hither to eat thee, that thou open not the doore to him. When the Goate was gone, the Wolfe came to the doore: and the kid answered him, Goe hence euill and false beast, for well I see thee through the hole, that to haue mee thou fainest the voice of my mother, and therefore I shall keep me well from opening the doore. Thus god children ought to marke and lay up in their hearts the precepts of their parents, for many a one is lost and undone for lack of obedience.

Of the Poore Man and the Serpent.

He that applieth himselfe to doe other men harme ought not to thinke himselfe secure; wherefore Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Serpent which came into the house of a poore man, and liued of that which fell from the poore mans table, for the which thing there hapned great fortune to this man, and he became very rich. Wnt on a day this man was very
angry

angry against the Serpent, and tooke a sword, and smote at him; wherefore the serpent went out of the house, and came no more thither againe. A little after, this man fell againe into great poverty, and then he knew that by fortune of the Serpent he was become rich; wherefore it repented him that he had driven away the Serpent. Then he went and humbled himselfe to the Serpent, saying: I pray thee that thou wilt pardon me the offence that I haue done thee. And the Serpent said: Seeing thou repentest thee of thy misdeede, I forgive thee: but as long as I shall live, I shall remember thy malice: for as thou hurtedst me once, so thou mailest againe. Wherefore that which was once evil, shall euer so be held; men ought therefore not to insult over him of whom they receiue some benefit, nor yet to suspect their good and true friends.

Of the Hart, the Sheepe, and the Wolfe.

A Promise which is made by force and for feare, is not to be kept. Whereof Esop rehearseth this following fable. A Hart in the presence of a Wolfe, demanded of a Sheepe that she should pay a bushell of corne, and the Wolfe commanded the sheepe to pay it. And when the day of payment was come, the Hart demanded of the Sheepe the corne. And the Sheepe said to him. The covenants and promises which are made by force and dread, are not to be kept; for it was force to me being before the Wolfe, to promise and grant to thee that which thou neuer lendst to me; therefore thou shalt haue nothing of me. Wherefore it is good sometimes to make promise of some small things, to withstand greater losse: for the things that are done by force, haue no fidelity.

Of the bald man and the fly.

Of a little evil may come a greater. Whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Fly which

which pricked a man vpon his bald head, and when he would haue smitten her, she fled away, and thus he smote himselfe, wherat the Fly began to laugh: and the bald man said, euill brast, thou deseruest well thy death; I smote my selfe, wherat thou diddest mock me, but if I had hit thee thou haddest surely bin slaine. Therfore men say commonly, that at the harm of other men, none ought to laugh or scoone, but enuious and scornfull words procure many enemies, for which cause it oft hapneth, that a few bad words cause great danger.

Of the Fox and the Storke.

NO man ought to doe vnto others, that which he would not should be done vnto himselfe. Of which Esop rehearseth this fable, to wit, of a For, which requested a Storke to supper, and the For put the meat vpon a trencher, the which meate the storke might not eat, wherof she took great displeasure and departed to her lodging: and because the For had thus deceiued her, she bethought her selfe how she might beguile the Fore: for as men say, It is merry to beguile the beguilers. Wherefore the Storke prayed the For to come and sup with her, and the Storke put his meat within a glasse, and when the For would haue eaten thereof he could not come by it, but only licked the outside of the glasse, because he could not reach in to it with his mouth. And then the Storke said to him, take part of such fare as thou gauest me. So the For right shamefully departed thence. Thus with the same rod which he made for other, he was beaten himselfe. Therfore he that beguileth other, must look to be beguiled again.

Of the Wolfe and the mans head.

SOME haue more worship than wit, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable of a Wolfe, which found a dead mans head, the which he turned vp and down with

with his foote, and said: Ah holy fair and pleasant hast thou been, and now thou hast in thee neither wit nor beauty, also thou art without voice & without thought: and therefore men ought not to behold the beauty and fairnesse of the body, but the goodnesse of the courage: for sometimes men giue glozy and wo:ship to some that haue not deserued it.

Of the Iay and the Peacock.

NOne ought to weare another mans raiment, and to be proud thereof as it were his own, whereof Esop rehearseth to us this fable. There was a Iay which decked and arraid her selfe with the feathers of a Peacocke; and when he was so deckt, he went and conuersed among the Peacocks: and when he was with them, he began to dispraise his fellows. And when the Peacocks knew that he was not of their kind, they anon plucked off all his feathers, and beate him in such manner that no feathers abode upon him, so he fled away all naked and bare: and when his fellows saw him, they said: what gallant cometh here? Where be his feathers which he had a while agoe? hath he no shame to come into our company? Then all the birds came vnto him and beate him saying: If thou hadst been content with thine own raiment, thou hadst not been put to this shame. Therefore it is not good to weare other mens clothes, for many there are which brag much of that which is not their owne.

Of the Mule and the Fly.

Some make a great labour which haue no might, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable. There was a Carter which had a Cart that a Mule drew forth, and because that the Mule went not fast enough, the Fly said to the Mule, Ah lazie Mule, why goest thou no faster? I shall so greatly prick thee, that I shall make this go lightly. The Mule answered, God keep the Moon from the wolues, for I haue no great dread nor feare of thee, but I dread and doubt for my Master that is

is upon me, which constraineth me to fulfill his will, and more I ought to dread and doubt him, than they that are nothing and of no value we might. Therefore men ought not to feare them which are not to be feared.

Of the Ant and the Fly.

TO make boast and vinting is but vaine glory; whereof Esop rehearseth this following fable. There was an Ant and a Fly which strined together, to wit. which was the most noble of them both. The Fly said to the Ant, come hither Ant, Will thou compare thy selfe with me, that dwell in the Kings Palace, and eate and drink at his Table: and also I flie both King and Queene, and the most faire maidens: thou poore miserable beast, art eiter within the earth. Then the Ant answered the Fly saying: Now know I well thy vanity and folly, for thou wastiest thee of that wherof thou shouldest be dispensed, for in all places where thou fliest, thou art hated and put out, and livest in great danger, and as soone as Winter cometh thou shalt die; but I shall abide alire within my chamber or hole, whereas I eate and drink at pleasure: for the Winter shall not forgine thee thy misdoings but shall slay thee. Thus he that will mock and dispraise other, ought first to look well into himselfe, for it is more wisdom to see and amend our own fautes, than to look into other mens.

Of the Wolfe, the Fox, and the Ape.

The man that once falleth into any euill cause, he shall liue with dishonour, and in suspicion euer after. And howbeit that in aduenture he put pose to doe some profitable thing to some other, yet he should not be trusted nor believed, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Wolfe that said the Foxe was an arrant thiefe, and a robber of poore people: and the Foxe answered and said, that he was, and that he was a good and true man, and that he did much good and profit. And then the Ape, which was

set as a Iudg between them, gaue sentence, and said thus to the Wolfe: Come hither, thou hast lost all that which thou demandest: And thou Fox, I belieue well that thou hast usurped, and robbed something, howbeit that thou deniest it in Justice: but because that peace may be betwixt you both, ye shall part together your goods, to the end that none of you both haue any whole part: For he that is accustomed to rob and steal, with great paine he may abstaine or refraine himselfe from it, for one beguiler euermore beguileth another. And because that the Ape found them both guilty and suspicious, he made them accord and part halfe by halfe. Wherefore they that be accustomed to any defraud, deceit, or falshood, shall euer liue in great mislike and suspicion.

Of the Man, and the Wesill.

MEN ought well to consider the courage and thought of him that doth good, and to the end wherefore he doth it; whereof Esop rehearseth a fable, of a man which took a Wesill which chased after Kats within his house: And after when he had taken the Wesill, he would haue killed her. When the pore Wesill saw the wrath and fury of the man, she cried vnto him for mercy, saying thus: My Lord, I require and pray thee that thou wilt pardon me, and that thou wilt reward me for the great seruice I haue done thee, for neuer I haue chased the Kats out of thy house. And the man said: thou didst it not for the loue of me, but only thou hast done it to fill thine owne belly: for if thou hadst done it for the loue of me, I would haue rewarded thee for it, but because thou didst it not for to serue me, but to let and damage me, for what the Kats could not eate, thou barest away, and being waxed fat of mine owne bread, thou must tender and giue to me all the fatnesse which thou hast gotten here; for he that robbeth must be robbed, *Iuxta illud, pilatores pilabuntur.* For it sufficieth not to do well, but men

men must haue a good intent in doing of it. Wherefore I will not pardon thee, seeing thhu deseruest no mercy, but presently put thee to death.

f the Fox and the Froge.

THe poore man ought not to compare himselfe to him that is rich, as Esop sheweth to us by this present fable. There was a Frog in a medow which espied an Oxe hard by in pasture, and perceiuing the Oxe great and her selfe litte, she began to swell against the Oxe, and said to her children, Am not I now as great as the Oxe, and as mighty? and her children said, nay mother, for when we behold the Oxe, you seem nothing like in bignesse to him. At these words the Frog began more to swell. And when the Oxe saw the pride and folly of the Frog, he trod vpon her with his foot, and brake her all to peeces. Therefore it is not good for the poore to compare himselfe with the rich, but rather to content himselfe in his calling: lest by straining beyond his power, he purchase not only the ill will of the wealthy, but work withall his own woe and overthrow.

The end of the second Book.

The third Book of the subtile Fables of Esop.

The first fable of the Lion and the Shepheard.

They that are mighty and puissant, ought not to be vnmindfull of the benefits done vnto them by the poore and simple, and ought also to requite them as much as in them lieth. As this Fable of Esop approueth and sheweth vs of a Lion which ranne after a beast, and as he ran, a thorn entred into his foot, which afterward hurt and grieved him greatly. Wherefore he might not go; but as well as he could, he came to a Shepheard which was keeping sheep, and began to flatter him with

his taile, shewing his foot which was hurt: The shepheard was in great feare and dread, and cast before the Lion one of his sheep, but the Lion demanded no meat: for more he desired to haue some help and ease of his foot than any meat. And when the shepheard saw the wound, he with his needle subtilly drew the thorne out of his foot, and took out of the wound all the rotten flesh, and corruption, and anointed the wound with such sweet oynments, that anon the Lion was whole. And for to render thanks vnto the shepheard, the Lion kissed his hand, and went again to the wood. And within a while after, it hapned that the Lion was taken, and conueighed into the Citie of Rome, and was put among the other beasts for to deuoure the misdoers. It also hapned in proesse of time, that the same shepheard committed an offence for which he was indged to be deuoured of beasts, and as soon as he was cast in among them, the Lion knew him, and began to behold him, and licked him with his tongue, and kept him from all other beasts. Then knew the shepheard that it was the same Lion which he had made whole, and that he would now recompence him for the good which he had done to him. Wherof all the Romans were greatly abashed, and would also know the cause of it, why he was so cherished by the wild beast. And when they knew the cause, they gaue leave to the shepheard to go home, and sent the Lion again to the Forrest: Men ought therefore to render thanks to their Benefactors, for ingratitude is displeasing to God, and hurtfull to man.

Of the Lion and the Horse.

EAch one ought to shun dissimulation, for none ought to feigne himselfe otherwise than he is, as Esop rehearseth vnto vs by this fable. There was a Lion which saw a Horse eat grasse in a meadow, and being desirous to deuoure the Horse, he went to him and said: God keep thee my brother, I am a good Deech,
and

and because thou hast a fore foot, I will help thee. The Horse knowing well the Lions euill intent, said: I am glad brother of thy coming hither, I pray thee now that thou wilt make my foe whole: and then the Lion said to the Horse. let me see thy foot; and as the Lion looked on it the Horse smote him on the forehead, in such wise that he brake his head, and the Lion fell to the ground, being hurt so grievously that he could hardly rise again. And being vp again, he said to himselfe: Surely I am well worthy of this, for he that seeketh euill, euill cometh to him: and because that I dissembled, and fained my selfe to be a Physition, whereas I should haue shewed my self a great enemy, I therfore haue receiued a meet reward. Therefore euery one ought to shew himselfe plainly as he is.

Of the Horse and the Asse.

HE that is fortunate and happy, knows not how soon he may be poore and miserable. And therefore none ought to despise the simple, but rather to think himselfe may become as meane and poore. Whereof Esop sheweth this fable. There was a great Horse which was well harnessed and apparelled and his saddle richly furnished with gold, this Horse met with a poore Asse sore laden in a narrow way: and because the Asse turned not back, incontinent the horse said to him, Unmannertly beaust, hast thou no shame, barest thou no reverence vnto thy Lord? Who holdeth me now, that I with my foot break not thy head, because thou gimest not place for me to passe by thee? The poore Asse answered neuer a word, but was sorry: and after that, he would haue beaten him, wherat the Asse still held his peace as wise and sage, and so the Horse went his way. And within a while after, it befell that fortune turned her wheele so down, that this faire horse became old, leane, and sick, and out of all prosperity, and his master commanded he should be had into the Town,

and instead of his rich saddle, men should put on his back a panier for to beare dung to the fields. Now it hapned that the Ass which was in a Meddow eating grasse, perceived the Horse, and knew him well, where of being greatly abashed, he marvelled much how he should becom so poore and leane. And as the Ass went toward him, he said, ha fellow, where is now thy faire saddle, and thy rich bridle garnished with gold? how art thou now becom so leane? what hath thy pride profited thee, and the great presumption which once thou didst shew to me? think now how thou art leane and vnthrift, and how thou and I be not of one office. And now the miserable and vnhappy Horse was abashed, and for shame looked downward, and answered neuer a word: For all his felicity was then cleane turned into aduersity. Wherefore they that be in felicity, ought not to mock and scorn them that be in aduersity, for many haue bin rich, which now are in great pouerty and need.

Of the Birds, and of the Beasts.

One man cannot serue two Masters, which be contrary one to the other, as Esop sheweth in this present fable. On a time the Beasts made great war against the Birds, and they fought often together. And the Bat fearing the wolues, and that the beasts would vanquish them, she thought in her mind and said to her selfe, We are not able to ouercome the beasts, wherefore I will saue my life and goe take part with them. And when the battaile was ordered on both sides, the Eagle began to enter into the battell of the Beasts by such a strength, that with the help of the other birds he got the field, and vanquished the beasts, wherefore the Beasts made peace with the Birds, and were all of one accord and one will: and for the treason that the Bat had made she was condemned neuer to see the day, and neuer to flie but only by night: and also she was despoiled of all her feathers. So he, that will

will serue two Masters, contrary one to another, is not to be accounted iust nor true: and they which leaue their owne master to serue a stranger, which is enemy to him, are worthy to be punished. For the Gospell saith, no man can serue both God and the deuill.

Of the Nightingale and the Sparhawke.

HE that oppresseth the innocent, shall haue an euill end, whereof Esop rehearseth this fable following. There was a Sparhawke which put her selfe within the nest of a Nightingale, where he found the young birds. The Nightingale came and perceined it, wherefore she prayed and required him to haue pittie on her young Birds: and the Sparhawke answered and said: If thou wilt that I grant thy request, thou must then sing sweetly after my will. And the Nightingale began to sing sweetly, not with the heart, but with the throat only, for she was filled with sorow that otherwise she might not sing. The Sparhawke said to the Nightingale, this song pleaseeth me not, and then he took one of the young birds and deuoured it. And as he would haue deuoured another, there came a Hunter: which did cast a Net vpon the Sparhawke, and when he would haue flown away, he might not, for he was taken. And therefore he that hurteth the innocent, is worthy to dye an euill death, as Cain did for killing Abel.

Of the Wolfe and the Fox.

Fortune helpeth both good and euill folke, and all them which she helpeth, no euill hapneth vnto them: But they that set their malice against Fortune, be subuerted and ouerthrowen by her. Whereof Esop rehearseth a fable. There was a wolfe which had gathered together a great prey of meat, that he might the better liue deliciously, wherof the Fox had great enuy, and that he might steal some of that meat, he went into the caue of the wolfe and said to him: My gossip, because that it is long since I saw thee, I am in great heauines
and

and sorow, and also because a long time we haue not bin conuersant together. When the Wolfe knew the malice of the For, he said, Thou art not come hither to see how I fare, but to rob me. For which words the For was angry, and went to a Shepheard, and said: If thou wilt be auenged on the Wolfe which is enemy to thy heard, this day shall I put him into thy hands. And the Shepheard answered the For thus: If thou doe as thou sapest, I shall pay thee well for it. Then the For shewed him the hole wherein he was, and the Shepheard incontinent went thither, and with aspeare he killed the Wolfe. By this means the For was well refreshed with the Wolfes victuals, but as he returned home, he was deuoured of dogs: wherefore he said to himselfe, because I haue done euill, euill commeth to me: for sin returneth to his Master, and euill to him that euill doth.

Of the Hart and the Hunter.

MEN sometime praise that that should be dispraised, and oftentimes men blain and dispraise that which should be praised, as Esop sheweth in this following fable. It hapned that a Hart vpon a time drank in a fountaine or Well, and as he drank he saw his head which was horned, wherefore he praised much his horns. And as he looked on his legges, which were long and small, he dispraised and disliked them. And as he was drinking, he heard the voyce and barking of dogges, wherefore he would haue fled into the Forrest to haue saved himselfe: and as he saw the dogs so nere him, he would faine haue entred within a bush hard by, but he might not, for his horns kept him out; and when he saw that he might not escape, he began to say within himselfe, I haue blamed and dispraised my legs, which haue bin to me profitable, and haue praised my horns, which be now the cause of my death. Men ought not therefore to dispraise the thing that is profitable, nor praise the thing that is vnprofitable. They ought to
praise

praise and loue the Church of Christs, and all the Commandements of the same. They ought also to dispraise and flee all sin and vice, which is both euill and damnable.

Of the Goddesse Iuno and Venus, with other women.

BEfore the Gods and Goddeses, men must euer praise chastity, for it is worshipfull and an honest thing to any man, to hold him well content alone. But Venus for her disport, & to driue away the time, would interpret the saying of the Vens, wherefore she demanded a Ven that was in her house. But at this time I shal keep my tongue and speak no further thereof, for many wise men haue seene and read all this book, and vnderstand all the matter of it. And because it is little and honest, and that we all be bound to keep Ladies in their worship and honour, and also in euery place wee ought to praise them, wee will now cease to enquire further of this matter and hissoy, which we shall leaue in Latine for great Clerks, and in speciall for them that will spend their time to study and read the glosse of Esop.

Of the Knight and the Widdow.

THe woman that liueth in this world without reproach and blame, is worthy to be praised greatly, whereof Esop rehearseth a fable of a man and a woman which loued much each other. It happened them by Atropos or death (which we every one must suffer) that the said man died, and as men would haue borne him to his grane, which was without this town, his wife made great sorrow, and wept pitiously: and when he was buried, she would remain still vpon the graue, and made her a little lodge, or house thereupon, and out off that lodge she would neuer depart for any faire words, neither for any gift, nor for displeasure of her Parents. Now it befell in the town that

that a misdoer was condemned to be hanged, and to the end he should not be taken downe from the gallows, commandement was giuen that a knight should keepe him; and as the knight kept him, he had a great thirst, and perceiuing the lodge of the said woman, he went vnto her, and desired her to giue him some drinke, and she with good heart gaue him drinke, and when he had drunke, he returned toward the gallows. This knight came another time to the woman to comfort her, and 3. times he did so. And as he was thus going and coming, doubting of no body, in the mean while the hanged man was taken from the gallows: and when the knight was come to the gallows and saw his dead man gone, he was greatly abashed, and not without cause, for he was charged with him vpon paine of death, that if he were taken away, this knight should suffer death: and incontinent he went to the said woman, and kissed her feet, and lay before her as he had bin dead. And she said, my friend, what wilt thou that I do for thee? Alas, said he, I pray thee that thou help and counsell me at my need, for now because I haue not kept my thiefe well, I must suffer death. And then the woman said, Haue thou no dread my friend, for I will find a means to deliuer thee, for we will take my husband, and hang him instead of the thiefe. Then began she to deliue, and took out of the earth her husband, and at night, she hanged him on the gallows in stead of the thiefe, and said to the knight: Right deare friend, I pray thee keepe it secret, for we do it secretly. Thus dead men haue some that sorrow for them, but the sorrow is sone gone and past. They that be aliuie haue some which dread them, but their dread ceaseth when they be dead.

Of the young man and the common harlot.

Of the common and foolish woman, Esop rehearseth to vs a Fable: There was a woman named

med Thais, which because of her fained loue, was the losse and death of many young men. To one that had beat her often befoze that time, she said: My right dear loue and friend, I suppose that of many a one I am desired and lored: neuerthelesse, I shall set my loue on thee alone, wherfore I pray thee that thou wilt be mine, and I shall be thine; for all thy goods I care not, but for thy sweet body. But he that very well knew the fantasie of the woman, answered her right sweetly, thy will and my will be both one, for thou art she I most desire, and she that I shall loue all the time of my life, if thou no more deceiue me, but because thou hast receiued me in times past, I am the more afraid of thee. But notwithstanding this, thou art much pleasant and faire in the sight of me. Thus the one beguiled the other: for the loue of a common harlot is not to be trusted: thou oughtest therefore to think, that the common woman alwayes loueth thy siluer more than thee.

Of the Father and the euill sonne.

THe good and wise Father ought to chastise his children in their young age, and not when they are old, for then it is much difficultie to make them bolw, as Esop rehearseth to vs a fable of a Father which had a Sonne, the which did nothing that he ought to haue done, but euer was going and playing in the Town. And the father for the misrule of his son, bratled euer, and beat his seruants, telling vnto them a fable of a Plowman or labourer, which bound a bul by the horns to an Oxe: The Bull would not be bound, but smote strongly at the man with his feet; and lanced at him with his horns. At the last being bound, the labourer said to them, I haue soynded and bound you both together to the end that you should do some labour. But I will that the least of you two, that is, the Bull, be learned and taught of the greatest, which is the Oxe, for I must

must (said the labourer to himselfe) bind them thus together, to the end that the Bull which is young, fierce, malicious and strong, smite, ne hurt no body, wherof great danger might come to me. But because he knoweth well that the Oxe shall teach and governe him well, I have bound them both together. Whereby this fable sheweth vs, that the Father ought both to teach and give good example to the child, and to chastise him while he is young: for he that loveth his child, will chastise him.

Of the Serpent and the File.

The Authour, that is to witte Esop, rehearseth unto vs a fable of two evils, saying: a Serpent entered sometime within the Forge of a Smith, for to search for some meat for her dinner, it hapned that she found a File, which she began to gnaw with her teeth. Then said the File to her, if thou do bite and gnaw me, yet shalt thou do me no hurt, but thou shalt hurt thy selfe; for by my strength all the iron is plained, and therefore thou art a losse to gnaw on me: for I tell thee that no euill may hurt ne damage another euill, and so of the hard: for one hard shall not break another ne: two envious men shall not both ride upon one Ass. Wherefore he that is mighty, must loue him that is as mightie.

Of the Wolves and the Sheep.

Such men as haue a good head and good captain, ought not to leane him, for he that leanieth, repenteth afterward, as Esop rehearseth to vs this fable: of the sheepe which had warre and contention with the wolves, and because that the wolves were too strong for the sheep, the sheep took for their help the Dogs and the weathers also, and then was the battaile of the sheep great and strong, and they fought so victoriously against the wolves, that they put them to flight. And when the wolves saw the strength of their aduersaries, they sent an Embassadour toward the sheep for to haue

haue peace among them: the which Embassadour said vnto the Sheep in this manner: If ye will giue vs the Dogs, we shall sweare vnto you, that we shall neuer keep ne hold war against you. And the Sheep answered: If ye will sweare hereto, we shall be content. And thus they made peace together, but the Wolves killed the Dogs, which were Captains of the Sheep: wherefore, when the little young Wolves were grown to their age, they came to each part, and contriued and assembled them together, and all with one accord and will said to their ancestors and fathers: We must eat vp all the Sheep. Their fathers answered and said vnto them: We haue made peace with them: Nevertheless, the young Wolves brake the peace and ran fiercely vpon the Sheep, and their fathers after them: and thus because that the Sheep had deliuered the dogs to the Wolves which were their Captains, they were all destroyed. Wherefore it is good to keep well a good Captain, which may at need succour and help; For a true friend at need, is better than gold; for if the Sheep had kept the dogges with them, the Wolves had not deuoured them. Wherefore it is a sure thing to keep well the love of his Protector and good friend.

Of the Man and the Wood.

HE that giueth ayd and help to his enemy, is the cause of his own death, as Esop rehearseth by this fable. There was a man which made an are, and after he had made it, he asked of the trees a handle for it, and the trees were content to giue him one. And when he had made fast the handle to the Are, he began to cut and throw downe to the ground all the trees: wherefore the Oake and Ash said: if we be cut it is but right and reason, for of our own selfe we be cut and thrown down. And that it is not good for one to put himselfe into the danger and subjection of his enemy,

as thou maist see by this present fable. For men ought not to giue the staffe by which they be beaten.

Of the VVolfe and the Dogge.

Liberty or freedom is a pleasant thing, wherof Esop rehearseth a fable. A Wolfe and a Dog by chance met together. And the Wolfe demanded of the Dog how he came to be so fat: the Dog answered: I haue well kept my Lords house, and haue barked at the thieues which came into my masters house: Wherefore he and his men giue me plenty of meat, wherof I am faire and fat. And the Wolfe said to him. It is well said my brother, and surely seeing thou farest there so well. I haue a very great desire to dwell with thee, to the intent that thou and I may both dine together. Well, said the Dog, come thou with me, if thou wilt be at thy ease as I am, and haue no dread, nor doubt of any thing. Then the Wolfe went with the Dog, and as they went by the way, the Wolfe beheld the Dogs neck which was all bare of haire, and demanded of the dog and said, My brother, why is thy neck so bare: and the dog said, it is by reason of my great collar of iron, to the which daily I am fastened, and at night I am unbound for to keep the house the better: then said the wolfe to the dog, I that am in liberty, will not be put in such subjection to be bound and need not, and therefore if thou beest accustomed thereto and likest well of it, continue so still and spare not, for I will not leaue my liberty to fill my body. By which we learne, that liberty is more to be regarded than wealth.

Of the hands, the feet, and the belly.

How shall one do any good to another, which can do no good to his own selfe: As thou maist see by this fable of the feet, and the hands, which sometime had

had great strife with the belly, saying, all that we may or can get by our labour, thou eatest it, and yet thou doest no good; wherefore thou shalt haue no more of vs, but we will let thee dye for hunger. And when the belly was soze hungry, she began to cry out, alas I dye for hunger, giue me somewhat to eat: and the feet and hands said, thou gettest nothing of vs. And because that the belly might haue no meat to sustaine it, the conduits thorow the which the meat palleth, became small and narrow, and within few daues after, the feet and hands through the feeblenes which they felt, would then haue laboured to get meat for the belly, but it was too late: for by too long fasting, the Conduits were joyned together, and therfore the limbs might do no good to other, that is to wit, the belly. And he that governeth not well his belly, with great paine he doth hold the other limbs in their strength and vertue. Wherefore a seruant ought to serue well his Master, to the end that his Master hold and keepe him honestly, and to receiue good reward of him when his Master shall see his faithfulness.

Of the Ape and the Fox.

OF the poore and the rich, Esop rehearseth a Fable of an Ape which prayed a Fox to lend him some of his taile, for to couer his buttocks therewith, saying thus to him, What doth thy long taile auaille thee? It auailleth thee nothing, but letteth thee: and that which letteth thee may be good for me. The fox said I would that it were yet longer. Fox rather I would that it were yet longer. Fox rather I would see it all soule and dagled, than it should beare to thee any such honour as to couer thy soule buttocks therewith. Giue not therefore away the thing that thou hast need of, lest thou want it afterward thy selfe.

Of the Merchant and the Ass.

MAN be tormented after their death, wherefore men ought not to hasten their owne death, as

¶

Esop

Esop rehearseth by this Fable of a Merchant which led an Asse laden into the market : and to be sold at market he beat the Asse and sore pricked him; wherefore the poore Asse wished and desired his owne death, weneing that after his death he should be at rest. And after he was well beaten he died. Then his Master made him to be flain, and of his skin he made Tabers which be ever beaten. And thus what pain so ever men haue during their life, they ought not to desire or wish their death. For many there be that haue great paine in this world, that shall haue greater in another world : for a man hath no rest for death, but for his merits.

Of the Hart and the Oxe.

Oply by saying none is assured to escape the danger from which he flyeth, as is shewed by this fable. There was a Hart which ran before the dogs, to the end that he should not be taken, and he fled into the first town that he found, and entred into a stable where in were many Oren, to whom he declared the cause why he was come thither, praying them that they would save him. And the Oren said thus to him : alas poore Hart, thou art among vs euill rescued, thou wouldest be more sure in the fields, for if thou be perceived, or seen of our Master, certainly thou art but dead. Alas for pittie said the Hart, I pray you that you will hide me within you rack, that I be not perceived, and at night I shall goe hence, and shall put my selfe into a sure place. Then one of the seruants came to giue hay to the Oren, and when he had done he went away, and saw not the Hart, whereat the Hart greatly rejoyced, weneing that he had escaped the perill of death; wherefore he rendered thanks to the Oren. But one of the Oren said to him, It is easie to escape out of the hands of the blind, but it is hard to escape from the hand of them that may well see. For if our Master

Waster come hither, which hath aboue an hundred eyes, certainly thou art but dead, if he perceiue thee. And if he see thee not, certainly thou art saued, and shalt go forth on thy way surely. The Waster within a short while after went into the stable: and after he had demanded to see the Hart which was before the Oren, he went himselfe and felt of it, and as he felt the hay, he felt also the horns of the Hart with his hands, and to himselfe he said, what is this that I feele here? And being afraid, called his seruants, and asked how that Hart came there? And they said to him: Surely my Lord we cannot tell. When their Lord was glad, and made the Hart to be taken and slaine, and the Lord made a great feast for to haue him eaten. It hapneth therfore oftentimes, that he which supposeth to die, is taken ere he be aware: wherfore men ought alwayes to keep themselves from doing such things whereby they need not fly.

Of the Ape and the Lyon, and of their
conuersation.

The conuersant among men of euill life, is a thing very perillous, as Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was a Lion strong and might, which made himselfe king for to haue the greater renowne and glory. And from thenceforth he began to change his conditions and custome, shewing himselfe courteous. And swearing that he would hurt no beasts, but would keep them safe against euery one. Afterward of this promise he repented him, because it was difficult and hard to change his own kind. And therefore when he was angry, he led with him some small beasts into a secret place, for to eat and deuoure them. And he demanded if his breath stanke or not, and they said it stanke; and all they which answered not, he presently killed and deuoured them. It hapned among the rest, that he demanded of the Ape whether his breath stank

or not, and the Ape answered no, and laid withall that it smelleth as sweet as any Balme; and then the Lion had shame to slay the Ape; but he found a subtile falshood for to put him to death. He fained himselfe shortly after to be sick, and commanded that all his Leeches and Surgions should come before him. When they were come, he commanded them to look on his urine, and when they saw it, they said to him, Sir, be of god comfort, and ye shall soon be whole: and the Lion said, alas, right faine would I eate of an Ape. Certainly said his Phisicians, that is very good meate for you. Then was the Ape sent for, and notwithstanding that he woꝛshipfully spake and answered to the King, the King made him to die, and deuoured him. It is perillous therefore and very harmfull to be in the fellowship of a Tyrant, for though it be against all equity and conscience, his will must stand for a law, and whatsoeuer he commandeth, must be put in practice, though it tend to the ruine of his best subjects.

The end of the third Book.

The fourth Book of the subtile Fables of Esop.

The first Fable maketh mention of the Fox and the Raisins.

HE is not so wise which desireth any thing that he may not haue, as rehearseth this present fable, of a Fox, which beheld the Raisins that grew vpon a Vine, which he greatly desired. And when he saw that he could get none, he turned his sorrow into joy, and said, these Raisins be sowre, and if I had some I would not eat them. Therefore he is wise that faineth not to desire the thing that he would willingly haue.

Of the Weill and the Rats.

IT is better for a man to haue wit than strength, as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was an old Weill

still which might no more take Rats, wherfore she was often hungry, and thought that she would hide her self within the floore to take the rats which came to eat it. And as the Rats came to the floore, she took and ate them one after another. And as the oldest rat of all perceiued her malice, he said thus in himselfe, certainly I shall keep me well from thee, for I know well thy malice and falshood. Therfore he is wise that escapeth the malice of his enemy by wit rather than by force.

Of the Wolfe, the Shepheard, and the Hunter.

Many folke shew themselves good in words, which are full of great fantasies, as Esop sheweth by this Fable. There was a Wolfe which fled from a Hunter, and as he fled he met a Shepheard, to whom he said, my friend, I pray thee tell not to him that followeth me, which way I am gone: and the shepheard said to him, feare nothing, I shal shew to him another way: when the Hunter came, he demanded of the Shepheard which way the Wolfe went. The Shepheard both with his head and eyes shewed the hunter the place where the wolfe was, and with his hand and tongue shewed the contrary. But the Wolfe perceiuing well all the false dealing of the Shepheard, fled away and escaped. And within a while after, the shepheard met the Wolfe, and said to him: pay me for that I kept thee secret. And the wolfe answered, I thank thy hands and tongue, and not thy head ne eyes, for by them I should haue bin betrayed if I had not fled a way. Therefore men must not trust him that hath two tongues, for such are like the scorpion, which healeth with his tongue and hurteth with his taile.

Of the goddesse Iuno, the Peacocke,
and the Nightingale.

Every one ought to be content with nature, and such goods as God hath sent them, to use them
justly.

justly, as is rehearsed vnto vs by this Fable : There was a Peacock which came to the goddess Iuno, and said vnto her, I am very heauy and sorrowfull because I cannot sing as well as the Nightingale, for euery one mocketh and scorneth me because I cannot sing. Then Iuno to comfort him, said : Thy faire form and beauty is of farre greater worth, and more to be praised than the song of the Nightingale, for thy feathers and thy colours be resplendishing, like vnto the precious Emerald, and there is no bird whose feathers are so faire and beautifull as thine be : the Peacock notwithstanding said to Iuno, all this is nothing seeing I cannot sing. Then Iuno spake again thus to the Peacock to content him saying, This is the disposition of the gods, which haue giuen to euery one a seueral property and vertue, as they think meet themselves : and as they haue giuen to thee faire beauty and goodly feathers, so haue they giuen vnto the Nightingale sweet and pleasant song, and to all other Birds their proper quality. Wherefore euery one ought to be content with that he hath, for the miserable conetous man, the more goods he hath, the more he desireth.

Of the Panther and the villaines.

Euery one ought to do well to the stranger, and to forgive the miserable, as Esop rehearseth by this Fable following. There was a Panther which fell into a pit, and when the villaines or churles of the Country saw her, some of them began to smite her, & others said forgive and pardon her, for she hath hurt no body ; and there were other that gaue to her bread, and another that said to the villaines, beware you slay her not. And because they were all of sundry minds, euery one of them went home again, weening that she would die within the said pit, but by little and little she climbed vp, and went her way. Within a while after, she ha-
ving in memory the great injury that had bin done to
her,

her, went again to the place where she had been so^e beaten, and began to kill and slay all the beasts there about, and put the shepheard and swinheard and other which kept beasts to flight, she likewise burnt their Corn, and did many other euills thereabout. And when the folks of the Country saw the great damage that she did to them, they came toward her, praying her to haue pitty on them. To whom she answered in this manner, I am not come hither to take vengeance on them which haue had pitty on me, but only on them which would haue slaut me. And for the wicked and euill folke I recite this fable, to the end that they hurt no body, for if the villaines had taken pity, one as well as another of the poore Panther, when she was in the pit, the foresaid euill had not hapned vnto them.

Of the Butchers and the Weathers.

That linage or kindred which is different in diuision, shall not do any thing lightly to their profit, as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Butcher which entred into a stable full of weathers, and when the weathers saw him, none of them said a word. The Butcher toke the first hee found; then the weathers spake all together and said, Let him doe what he will; and thus the Butcher took them all one after another saue only one. And as he would haue taken him, the poore Weather said, justly am I worthy to be taken, because I haue not holp my fellows: for he that will not help others, ought not to look for help of others: wherefore vertue vnited is better than vertue separated.

Of the Faulconer and the Birds.

The wise ought euer to keep good counsell, and in no wise ought they to do the contrary, as rehearseth this fable of the birds which were joyfull and glad when the prime time came, because their nestes were

then couered all with leaues. Incontinent they beheld and saw a Faulconer which drest and layd his laces and nets for to take them, and then they said all together: yonder man hath pittie on vs, for when he beholdeth vs, he weepeth. And the Partrich which had often experimented all the deceits of the said Faulconer, said to them: keep ye all well from the said man, for he seeketh nothing but the manner how to take you, and when he hath taken you he will eate and deuoure you, or else beare you to the market and sell you: and as many as belieued his counsell, were saued. Wherefore they that scorn good counsell, are worthy to fall into danger.

Of the true man, the Lier and the Ape:

MAny men in time past, praised more the people full of leasing than them that told truth. Which thing raigneth with some vnto this day, as we may vnderstand by this present Fable, of a true man and a lier, which went both together thorow the Country, and so long they went together in their journeys, as they came to a Prouince of Apes, and the King of Apes made them to be taken and brought before him: he being set in his maiesty, like an Emperour, and all his Apes about him, as subiects be about their Lord. demanded of the Lier and said, who am I? and the liar flatteringly said vnto him, Thou art Emperour and King, and the fairest creature that is vpon the earth. Then the King demanded of him again: Who be these that be about me? and the liar answered, Sir, they be your Knights and your subiects, to keep your person and your realm. Then the King said, thou art a good man, I will that thou be my great Steward of my household, that euery one beare to thee honour and reuerence. When the true man heard all this, he said in himselfe, if this man for making of lyes be so greatly aduanced, then by great reason I shall be more worshipped if I speake truth. Then the King asked
the

the true man and said, Who am I, and all that be about me? then the true man answered: Thou art an Ape, and a beast right abominable, and all they which are about thee, are like vnto thee. Then did the King command he should be torne with teeth and clawes, and cut all in peeces. And therefore it happeneth oft, that lpers be aduanced, and true men set low, yea many times for saving the ruth, men lase their liues, which thing is against all iustice and equity.

Of the Horse, the Hunter, and the Hart.

NOne ought to put himselfe in subiection, for to auenge him on other, for better it is not to submit himselfe, then to be submitted: as Esop rehearseth by this fable following. There was an Horse which enuied an Hart, because she was fairer than he. This Horse through enuie went vnto an Hunter, to whom he said in this manner: If thou wilt belæue me, we shall this day take a good prey; leape vpon my back, and take thy sword, and we shall chase the Hart: and thou shalt kill him with thy sword, and so thou maist eate him and sell his skin. And then the Hunter moved by auarice, demanded of the Horse saying, Thinkest thou indeed we may take the Hart of whom thou speakest to me? And the Horse answered thus, Assure thy selfe of it, for hereto shall I put all my diligence and strength, leape on my back, and do after my counsell: and then the Hunter leapt vpon the Horse, and began to run him after the Hart; and when the Hart saw him come he fled, but by reason that the Hart ran faster than the horse did, he scaped from them and saved himselfe. And when the horse felt himselfe very wearp, and that he might no more runne, he said to the Hunter in this manner, light from my back, for I may bare thee no more, and I haue missed of my prey. Then said the hunter to the horse, seeing thou art entred into

into my hands, thou shalt not yet escape from me this, thou hast the bridle in thy mouth, wherby thou maist be kept still and restrained, and though thou wilt leape, the saddle shall keep me, and if thou wilt cast thy feet from thee, I have good spurs to constraine thee and make thee to goe whether thou wilt or no. Where I will haue thee: therefore keep thy selfe well, that thou shew not thy selfe rebellious vnto me. It is not good therefore for a man to put himselfe in subjection to another, that thereby he may be auenged of his aduersary, for who so submitteth himselfe vnder the might of another, is bound to do his will.

Of the Asse and the Lion.

Great callers by their high and loud cry, suppose thereby to make folke afraid, as Esop rehearseth by this present Fable. There was an Asse which sometime met with a Lion, to whom he said: Let vs both goe vp to the top of a mountain, and I shall shew thee how the beasts be afraid of me: and the Lion began to smile, and answered the Asse, go we my brother: and when they were vpon the top of the hill, the Asse began to cry, and the Foxes and Hares began to flee. When the Asse saw them flee, he said to the Lion, seest thou not how the Beasts dread and doubt me? The Lion said, I had also bin fearefull of thy voice, if I had not known verily that thou art but an Asse. Wherefore men need not to doubt him which aduanceth himselfe to do that he cannot do. Neither need men to feare a foole for his noise, nor his great voice.

Of the Hawke and other birds.

The hypocrites make to God a beard of straw, as in this fable of a Hawke, which sometime fained that he would releebrate a nativity, or hold a very great feast, the which should be kept within a Temple: and vnto this feast and solemnity, he invited and summoned

ned all small the Birds, to which they came. And incontinent as they were all come to the feast, and entered into the Temple, the Hawke did shut the gate, and put them all to death one after another. Wherefore this fable sheweth unto us, how we must keep our selves from all them which vnder faire seeming haue a false heart, for those be hypocrites, and deceiuers of God and the world.

Of the Fox and the Lion.

HE is well aduised that taketh warning by the perill of other men, as this fable sheweth, of a Lion which sometime fained himselfe sick, and when the beasts knew that the Lion was sick, they would go all to visit and see him as their King, and incontinent as the beasts entered into his house to see him, he deuoured them. And when the Foxes were come to the gate for to haue visited the Lion, they knew well the fallacy and falshood of the Lion, and saluted him at the entry of the gate, but entered not within: and when the Lion saw that they would not enter into his house he demanded of them why they would not come in. Then one of the Foxes said to him, We perceiue well by the traces, that all those beasts which haue entered into thy house come not out again; wherefore we think, that if we should once enter in, we should come no more out. He therefore is to be accounted wise, which taketh warning by other mens harms.

Of the Assie and the Wolfe.

FAith and truth from an euil man is seldom to be expected, as Elop rehearseth by this fable of a Wolfe which visited an Assie which was very sick, the Wolfe began to feele and touch him, and demanded of him and said; My brother and friend, whereabouts is thy sore? and the Assie said to him: euen in that place where thou touchest: and then the Wolfe faining to help,

help, began to bite and smite him. Men must therefore beware of flatterers, for they say one thing, and doe another.

Of the Hedge hog and the three Kids.

THose that be young ought not to mock and scorne their Elders, as Elop sheweth by this Fable of three little Goates which mocked a great Hedge hog which fled before a Wolfe: and when he perceined their scorning, he said vnto them, Ah poore soles, ye wot not wherfore I flee, if ye wist and knew the perill, ye would not mock me. Wherefore, when men see the great and mighty be fearfull, the lesse and feeble ought not to think themselves safe and sure: for when a towne is taken by hazard of war, the whole Country about ought to tremble and be afraid.

Of the man and the Lion.

MEN ought not to beleue the Painter, but the truth and the deed, as men may see by this present Fable, of a man and a Lion, which had strife together, and were in great dissention, for to witte and know which of them was more strong. The man said he was stronger then the Lion, and for to haue his saying verified, shewed to the Lion a picture, whereas a man had victory ouer a Lion, and the picture of Samson the strong. Then said the Lion vnto the man, if the Lions could make pictures as well as men, it should be here sholwen, how the Lion had victory ouer the man, and now (quoth he) I shall shew thee the proofe hereof: then the Lion led the man to a great pit, and there they fought together, but the Lion cast the man into the pit, and submitted him to his subjection, saying: Thou man, now knowest thou well which of vs two be the stronger, and therefore by the work, the workman may be knowne.

OF

Of the Camell and the Fly.

HE that hath no might, ought not to praise himselfe, as Esop sheweth by this fable. It hapned that a Fly because of the Camells haire, leapt to the backe of the Camell which was loaden, and was borne of him all the day: and when they had gone a great way, and that the Camell came to his Inne, and was put in the stable, the Fly leapt from him to the ground beside the foote of the Camell; and then said to the Camell, I haue pittie of thee, and am come downe from thy backe, because I would no more be burthensome vnto thee. And the Camell said to the Fly, I thanke thee; howbeit I am not sore laden of thee. And therefore, of him which may not greatly hurt, little estimation is to be made.

Of the Ant and the Creket.

Necessary it is for every man to provide for himselfe in summer, such things whereof he shall haue need in winter, as thou maiest see by this present fable. There was a Creket which in the winter time demanded of the Ant some corne to eat. And then the Ant said to the Creket, what hast thou done all the summer last past? and the Creket answered, I haue sung. Then said the Ant, of my Corne thou gettest none: for if thou hast sung all the Summer, go dance all the Winter. By which we learn, that there is a time ordained for labour, as well as a time for rest. For he that will not worke when he should, shall want when he would not.

Of the Pilgrim, and the sword.

One evill man may be the cause of great perill and losse to many folke, as Esop rehearseth by this present fable. There was a Pilgrime which by chance found in the way a sword, and he asked of the sword, what is he that hath lost thee? And the sword answered to

to him, One man alone hath lost me, but many a one I haue lost. And therefore an euill man may well be lost, but ere he be lost he may well let many a one. For by an euill man, may come into a Country many euils.

Of the sheep and the Crow.

NOne ought to doe injury, nor despise the poore innocents or simple ones: as rehearseth this present Fable of a Crow, which set her selfe on the back of a Sheep. And when the sheep had bozme her a great while, she said to her, thou shalt keep thy selfe well to set thee vpon a Dog. Then the Crow said to the sheep, thinkest thou not poore innocent, but that I tooke well with whom I play: for I am old and malicious, and my kind is to harm all innocents, and to be a friend vnto the euill. Wherefore this Fable sheweth, that there be folke of such kind as they wil do no good works but only let and hinder the innocent and simple.

Of the Tree and the Reed.

NOne ought to be prond against his Lord, but to humble himselfe vnto him, as rehearseth this present Fable, of a great Tree which would neuer bowe for any wind, and the Reed which was at his foot bowed euery way when as the wind pleased. Whereupon the Tree said to the Reed, why dost thou not stand still as I doe and the Reed answered, I haue not the might that thou hast. And the tree said to the Reed prondly, then haue I more strength than thou: And anon after, there came a great wind which threw down the said Tree to the ground, and the Reed abode vp still. Thus we learn hereby, that the prond ere they be alwaie are suddenly thrown down, and the humble many times are exalted.

The end of the fourth Booke.

Here

Here beginneth the fifth Booke, whereof the
first Fable is of the Mule, the Wolfe
and the Fox.

MEN call many folke Asses that be very subtil and
wise, and many think themselves wise, which de-
serue to be accounted Asses, as appeareth by this Fa-
ble: there was a Mule which ate grasse in a meadow
neer a great Forrest, to whom came a For, which de-
manded of him and said: What art thou? And the
Mule answered, I am a beast. And the For said, I do
not aske that of thee, but I aske who was thy Fa-
ther? and the Mule answered, My great Father was
a Horse. And the For said again, I do not aske that,
but only that thou tell me what is thy name. And the
Mule said, I know not, because I was little when my
Father dyed: neuertheless to the end that my name
should not be forgotten, my father made it to be writ-
ten vnder my left foot behind, wherfore if thou wilt
know my name, look vnder my foot. And when the
For vnderstood the falshood of the Mule, he went a-
gain to the Forrest and met the Wolfe, to whom he
said: Oa miserable beast, what doest thou here? come
with me, and into thy hands I shall put a good prey to
fill thy belly. Look in vnder meadow, and there thou
shalt find a good fat beast, with which thy hunger
may be satisfied. The Wolfe went presently into the
meadow, and finding there the Mule, he laid vpon him
in this manner: Who art thou? and the Mule an-
swered the Wolfe, saying, I am a Beast. The Wolfe
said to him, that is not the thing which I aske of thee,
but tell me how thou art named. The Mule said, I
wot not, but neuertheless, if thou wilt know my
name, thou shalt find it written vnder my left foot be-
hinde. Then the Wolfe said, I pray thee shew it me,
and the Mule lift vp his foot and as the Wolfe looked
thereon

thereon, the Mule gave him such a stroake there-with on the fore-head, that almost the braines fell out of his head. And then the Fox, which was behind a bough and saw all the matter, began to laugh, and mocke the Wolfe, saying, Foule beast, thou wottest well that thou canst not reade, wherefore euill thereof is come to thee, thy selfe being cause of it. Fox none ought to take vpon him the thing which he cannot doe, lest by shewing his ignorance he be willing to be mocked for his labour.

Of the Bore and the Wolfe.

THere are some that presume for to be great persons; and dispraise their owne parents, which at the last do become poore, and fall into great dishonour: as Esop sheweth by this fable. There was a Bore among a heard of Swine, and for to haue dominion and lordship over them, he began to make a great rumoz, and shewed his great teeth to make the other Swine afraid; but because they knew him, they set nought by him, wherefore he was much displeased, and went thence vnto the heard of sheep and Lambs. And when he was there, he began to make a great rumoz, and shewed them his great teeth. And when the Lambs heard him, they were very much afraid, and began to shake for feare. Then said the Bore within himselfe, Here is the place wherein I must abide and dwell, for here I shall be greatly worshipped, for euery one quaketh for feare of me. Then came the wolfe thither for to haue gotten some prey, and the Lambs began to flee: but the Bore as proud would not stir him, ne goe from the place, because he supposed himselfe Lord, but the Wolfe tooke him, and bare him into the wood for to eate him. And as the wolfe bare him, it hapned that he passed before the heard of Swine which the Bore had left, and when the Bore perceined and knew them he cried a loud and prayed them for Gods loue that they

they would help him, saying, that without their help he was but dead. And then the Swine all with one consent, went and recovered their fellow, and slew the Wolfe. When the Boze was thus deliuered, and saw himsele among the Swine, he began to haue shame because he was thus departed and gone from their fellowship, and said to them. My brethren and friends, I am well worthy to suffer this pain, because I haue gone and departed from you. Wherefore, he that is well, ought so to keepe himsele, for many by pride couet to be great Lords, and oft fall therby into great pouerty.

Of the Fox and the Cocke.

Oftentimes much speeche hurteth, as rehearseth this Fable. There was a Fox which came to a Cock and said, I would faine know if thou canst sing as well as thy Father could. And the Cock shut his eyes and began to crow and sing. And then the Fox caught him and carried him away. And the people of the Town cried and said, the Fox beareth away the Cock. Then the Cock said thus to the Fox, my Lord, vnderstandest thou not, that the people say, thou bearest away their cock, tell to them that it is thine and not theirs. And as the Fox said, It is not yours but mine, the cock escaped from the Foxes mouth, and flew by into a tree, and then the cock said to the Fox, Now thou liest, for I am theirs and not thine. And then the Fox began to hit the earth both with his mouth and head, saying, Pouth thou hast spoken too much, thou mightest haue eaten the cock, had it not bin for thy many words. Thus we see that ouermuch talking letteth, and too much crowing smarteth. Keepe thy self therefore from ouer many words, lest after ward it repent thee.

Of the Dragon and the Labourer.

NOne ought to render euill for good, and they that help, ought not to be hurt, as this Fable sheweth, of a Dragon which was within a riuer, and as the Riuer was diminished of water, the Dragon abode at the Riuer which was all drie, and thus for lack of water he could not stirre him. A labourer or villaine came that way, and demanded of the Dragon, saying: what dost thou here? and the Dragon said, here I am without water, without the which I cannot moue, but if thou wilt bind me, and set me vpon thy Asse, and lead me into a Riuer, I shall giue thee abundance of gold and siluer: and the villaine for couetousnesse bound him and led him into the Riuer: and when he had bound him, he demanded of him his salary or payment. The Dragon said to him, because thou hast bound me thou wilt be paid, and because that I am now hungry, I will eat thee: and the villaine answered and said, for my labour wilt thou eat and deuoure me? And as they strided together, the Fox being within the Forrest, and hearing their questioning, came to him and said in this manner. Strive ye no more together, for I will accord and make peace betwixt you, let each of you tell to me his reason, for to wit which of you haue right. And when each of them had told his tale. The Fox said to the villaine, shew to me how thou boundest the Dragon, that I may giue therof a lawfull sentence. And the villaine put the Dragon vpon his Asse, and bound him as he did before. Then the Fox demanded of the Dragon, held he thee so fast bound as thou art now? and the Dragon answered, Yea my Lord, and yet more hard. And the Fox said to the villaine, bind her yet more harder, for he that well bindeth well he can vnbind. And when the Dragon was fast bound, the Fox said to the villaine, beare him again where thou didst first bind him, and there leaue him bound as he is now, and so he shall not

not eat and deuoure thee. For he that doth euill, shall be rewarded with euill: and they that offer harm to the poore shall haue punishment from God.

Of the Fox and the Cat.

MAny there be which aduance themselves, and think that they be wise and subtil, which be stark fooles and know nothing, as rehearseth this present fable, of a Fox that sometime met with a Cat, to whom he said, My Gossip, God giue you good day. And the Cat said, My Lord, God giue you good life. And then the Fox demanded of him: my Gossip, what canst thou do? And the Cat said vnto him, I can leape a litle, and the Fox said to him, certainly thou art not worthy to liue, because thou canst do nothing. And because that the Cat was angry at the Foxes words, he demanded of the Fox and said, Gossip what canst thou do? A thousand sundry wiles haue I, said the Fox, for I haue a sack full of sciences and wiles, and I am so great a scholler that none can deceiue me. And as they were thus talking together, the Cat perceiued a Knight comming towards them, which had many dogs with him, wherfore he said to the Fox, my Gossip, certainly I see a Knight comming hitherward, which hath with him many dogges, the which as ye know be our enemies. The Fox answered, my Gossip, thou speakest like a coward, and one that is afraid, let him come, and care not thou. And incontinent the dogs perceiued the Cat and the Fox, and began to run vpon them: and when the fox saw them come, he said to the Cat: Let vs flee Gossip, to whom the Cat answered: certainly Gossip there is no need: neuertheless the Fox beleied not the Cat. but fled, and ran as fast as he could to saue him, and the Cat leapt vp into a tree and saued her selfe. Now shall we see who shall play best for to preserue and saue himselfe.

When the Cat was vpon the tree, she looked about her, and saw how the dogs held the Fox with their teeth to whom she cried and said, O my Golsip and subtile Fox, of a thousand wiles that thou canst do, let me now see one of them. The Fox answered not, but he was killed of the dogs, and the Cat escaped. Wherefore the wise ought not to despise the simple, for some are supposed to be wise, and yet are very fooles.

Of the Hee Goate and the Wolfe.

HE that is feeble, ought not to arme himselfe against the strong, as rehearseth this fable, of a Wolfe which sometime ranne fast after a he Goate for to save himselfe leapt vpon a rock, and the Wolfe besieged him. And after when they had dwelled there two or three days, the wolfe began to war hungry, and the goate to haue thirst. And thus the Wolfe went for to eat, and the Goat to drinke. And as the Goat drank, he saw his shadow in the water, and beholding his shadow, said thus within himselfe, Hast thou so faire legs, so faire a beard, and so faire horns, and hast feare of the Wolfe? If it happen that he come again, I will charge him well, and keep him wel, and he shall have no charge ouer me. And the Wolfe which held his peace, and harkned what he said, took him by one of his legs, saying thus: what words be these that thou doest say brother he Goate? And when the goat saw that he was taken tardy, he thus answered the Wolfe, O my Lord, I say nothing, haue pittie on me, I know well I haue offended: notwithstanding, the Wolfe took him by the neck and strangled him. Therefore it is a very great folly for those that are feeble, to make any war against the mighty.

Of the Wolfe and the Ass.

NOne ought to beleue lightly the Counsell of him whom hee mindeth to hurt, as yee may see by this

this fable. There was a Wolfe which met wi h an Asse, to whom he said, My brother, I am hungry, wherefore I must needs eat thee. And the Asse answered him right gently, My Lord, with me thou maiest do what thou wilt, for if thou eatest me, thou shalt put me out of great pain: but I pray thee, if thou wilt eat me, that thou vouchsafe to eat me out of the high way: for well thou knowest that I bring home raisins from the Vine, and the corn from the fields, also thou knowest that I bear home the wood from the Forrest, and when my Master wil edifie some building, I must goe fetch the stones from the mountaine, and also I bear the corn to the mill, and after I bear home the meale, and briefly I was boyn in a cursed houre, for to all pain, and to all labour I am subiect: for the which I would not that thou shouldst eat me here in the high way, for the great shame that might come thereof to me: but I instantly require thee, that thou wilt heare my counsell, namely, that we go into the Forrest, and thou shalt bind me by the breast as thy seruant, and I shall bind thee by the neck as my master, and thou shalt lead me before thee into the wood wheresoeuer thou wilt, to the end that there thou maiest more secretly eat me. To this the Wolfe accorded, and said, I am willing to do so. And when they were come into the Forrest, they bound each other in the manner as is aforesaid. And when they were bound, the Wolfe said to the Asse, go whither thou wilt, and go before to shew the way, and the Asse went before, and led the Wolfe into the right way of his masters house. And when the Wolfe began to know the way, he said to the Asse: We go not the right way. To the which the Asse answered, My Lord, say not so, for certainly this is the right way. But for all that, the Wolfe would haue gone another way. Neuerthelesse the Asse led him to the house of his Master, and as his Master and all his men saw the asse draw the Wolfe after him,

and would haue entred into the house, they came out with clubs and stauces and smote on the Wolfe, and as one of them would haue smitten a great stroak vpon the Wolfes head, he brak the cord wherewith he was bound, and so he escaped and ran away from them sore hurt and beaten. And the Ass for great joy that she was so escaped from the Wolfe, began to sing, and the Wolfe which was vpon the mountain, hearing the voice of the Ass, began to say to himselfe, thou maist be merry and glad, but I shall keep thee well another time, that thou shalt not bind me as thou hast done. And therfore it is a great folly to beleine the counsell of him whom men would hurt, and to put himselfe in his subjection. He that hath bin once beguiled, must take heed another time, for he to whom men purpose to do some euill turn, when they haue him at aduantage, they must keep them on the surer side.

Of the Serpent and the Labourer.

THe authoz of this book rehearseth such another fable, and of such meaning as the precedent, that is to wit, that men should not beleue him vnto whom they haue done euill, saying: that somtime in haruett time a Labourer went to see his goods in the fields, the which met in his way a Serpent, and with a stafte which he bare in his hand, smot the said Serpent, and gaue him such a stroak on the head, that he almost slew him. Then the Serpent feeling himselfe sore hurt, he went from the man, and entred into his house, and said vnto the Labourer, O euill friend thou hast beaten me, but I warn thee, that thou neuer beliene him vnto whom thou hast done any euill. Of which words the labourer made little account, and went forth on his way. It shortly befell, that this Labourer went againe that way for to eare his ground. To whom the Serpent said, O my friend, whither goest thou? and the

the labourer said vnto him, I go to eare and plow my ground. And he said vnto him, sow not too much; for this yeare shall be full of rain, and great abundance of water shall fall. But the labourer said, I beleue not him whom I haue sometime done any euill, and without nide words the labourer went forth on his way, and belieued not the Serpent, but made all his ground to be sowed with as much corn as he might. And the same yeare fell great store of water, wherfore the said labourer had but little corn, for the most part of the corn that he had sown, perished because of the great rain. And the next yeare following, as the labourer passed by the hole of the foresaid Serpent, and went to sow his ground, the Serpent demanded of him, My friend, whither goest thou? The labourer answered, I go to sow my ground with corn and other grain, such as I hope shall be necessary for me in time to come. Then said the Serpent, my friend, sow but little corn, for the summer next coming shall be so hot, that by drowelle and heat, all the corn sown in the earth shall perish: but beleue not him to whom thou hast done any euill. And without any more speech the labourer went and thought of the words of the Serpent. And wening that the Serpent had said so to deceite him, he sowed as much corn and other grain as he might, and it hapned that the Summer next following was such as is aboue said, wherfore the man was beguiled, for he gathered the same yeare nothing. The next yeare following, the said labourer went again for to eare his ground: and as the serpent saw him come, he demanded of the labourer in this manner: My friend, whither goest thou? Then answered the labourer, I go to eare my land. Then said the Serpent, My friend, sow not too much, ne too little of corn and other grain; sow betwixen both: Neuerthelesse, beleue not him vnto whom thou hast done euill: and I tell thee that this yeare shall be more temperate and fertile of all

manner of corn that thou sowest. The labourer had no sonner heard these woꝝds, but forthwith he went his way, and did as the serpent had said, and that yere he gathered much good, because of the good disposition of the time. And on a day the same yere, the Serpent meat the same labourer comming from haruest, vnto whom he said, Now say my friend, hast thou not found this yere great plenty of good, as I told thee before? And the labourer answered, yea certainly, whereof I thank thee. And then the serpent demanded of him remuneration, or reward. And the labourer demanded what he would haue, the serpent said, I demand of thee nothing, but only that to morrow in the morning thou send me a dish full of milk by some of thy children. And then the serpent shewed the labourer the hole of his dwelling, and said vnto him, Tell thy son that he bring the milk hither, but take heed to that, the other while I told thee that thou belieuest not him to whom thou hast done euill. And anon after, when these things were said, the labourer went homeward, and in the morning he took his son a dishfull of milk, and he carried it to the serpent, and set it before the hole; and the serpent came out, and slew the child with his venome. And when the labourer came to the field, passing by the hole of the said serpent, he found his son lying dead vpon the ground. When the labourer began to cry with a loud voice, as one full of sorrow or heauynesse, saying: Woe cursed and euill serpent, venomous and false traitor, thou hast deceiued me. A wicked and deceitfull beast, full of contagious euill, thou hast slaine my son. And the serpent said vnto him, I will well that thou know that I haue not slaine him sorrowfully, ne without cause, but for to auenge me of the hurt that thou hast done to me without cause, and hast not amended it. Remembrest thou not how oft I haue said vnto thee, that thou shouldest not beleue him vnto whom thou hast

hast done evill : Remember it now that I am avenged of thee. This Fable sheweth, how men ought not to beleue or giue any credit to them whom they haue done some harme in time past. For old hatred is soon renewed, and malice will not be satisfied without working euill.

Of the Fox, the Wolfe, and the Lion.

HE that hath bin endamaged by another, ought not to take vengeance by the tongue, in giuing iniurious words, because such vengeance is dishonest, as this present fable following sheweth. Sometime there was a Fox that ate fish in a river. It hapned that the wolfe came that way, and when he saw the Fox which ate with so great appetite, he began to say, my brother giue me some fish. And the Fox answered him, Alas my Lord, It behoueth not that ye eate the reliefe of my table, but for the worship of your person I shall counsell you well. Do so much as get you a basket, and I shall teach you how ye shall take fish, to the end that ye may alwaies take some when ye be hungry. And the wolfe went into the street, and stole a basket, and brought it with him, and the fox took the basket, and bound it with a cord at the wolves taile, and when it was well bound, the Fox said to the Wolfe, go you into the river, and I shall take heed to the basket. And the wolfe did as the fox bad him, and as the wolfe was going within the water, the Fox by his malice filled the basket full of stones, and when the basket was full, the Fox said to the Wolfe : Certainly my Lord, I may no more lift, ne hold the basket so full : for it is full of fish : and the Wolfe wæning that the fox had said truth, said, I render thanks to the gods, that once I may see and learne the excellent art of fishing. And then the fox said to him. My Lord abide you here, and I shall fetch some to helpe vs fox to take the fish out of the basket. And in saying these words, the
Fox

For ran into the street, where he found diuers men, to whom he said in this manner : What do you here ? Why stand ye idle ? See yonder is the Wolfe which ate your Sheep, your Lambs and your beasts, and now he taketh your fish out of the river, and eateth it. And then all the men came together, some with stings, and some with bowes, and other with staves to the river, where they found the Wolfe, whom they beat outragiously. And when the poore Wolfe saw himself thus oppressed and beaten with stroaks, he began with all his strength and might to draw, and supposed to have carried away the fish, but so strongly he drew, that he pulled his taile from his arse; and very hardly escaped with his life. In the mean time it happened that the Lion which was King over all beasts, was sick, and the Wolfe thinking he was quit with the For, went for to see him as his Lord : And when he came there, he saluted the Lion, saying unto him thus : My King I salute you, pleaseth it you to know that I have gone round about the country and Province, and in all places of it, for to seek medicines profitable for you, for to recouer your health, but nothing haue I found good for your sicknesse, but only the skin of Reynard the for, fierce proud and malicious, which is to your body medicinall, but he disdaineth to come hither to see you, but ye may call him to counsell, and when he is come, let his skin be taken from him, and then let him run whither he will ; and that fair skin which is so wholesome, ye shall cause it to be bound upon your body, and within few dayes after, it shall make you in as good health as ever you were. And when he had said these words, he departed from the Lion and took his leaue : but ever he supposed that the for had heard him, and so he did, for he was within a tartar night unto the place, where he heard all the proposition of the Wolfe, to the which he did provide a remedy, and great preservation : For as long
as

as the Wolfe was departed from the Lion, the Fox went into the fields, and in the high-way he found a great dunghill, within the which he put himselfe. And when he supposed himself to be defiled and dagled enough, he came thus arraid vnto the lodge of the Lion, whom he saluted as his soueraigne Lord, saying to him in this manner: Sir King, God giue you good health, & the Lion answered, God saue thee my sweet friend, come neere and kisse me, and after I shall tell thee some secret, which I would not that euery one should know. To whom the fox said in this manner, ah sir King be not displeased, for I am foule arraped and all to dagled, by reason of the great way which I haue gone, seeking all about for some good medicine to helpe you, wherefore it behoueth me not to be so neere your person, for the stinke of the dung would grieue your person, and molest the great sicknesse which you have: but dear Sir, if it please you, ere euer I come neere to your royall maiesty, I shall bathe and make me cleane, and then I shall come againe, and present my selfe before thy noble person: notwithstanding all this, let it please thee to wit and know, that I am come from all the countreyes hereabout, and from all the realms adioynning to this prouince, for to see if I could find some good medicine needfull for thy sicknesse, and to recouer thy health: but certainly I can find no better counsell, than the counsell of an ancient Greeke with a great long beard, a man of great wisdome and experience, who told me that in this prouince is a wolfe without a taile, which hath lost his taile by vertue of the medicine that is in him, for the which thing it is very needfull and expedient, that ye make this Wolfe to come before you, that by him you may recouer your former health: and when he is come, dissemble and call him to counsell, and say that it shall be much for his worship and profit: and as he shall be neere vnto you, cast vpon him your armed feet, and as swiftly as ye

ye may, pull the skin from the body of him, and keep it whole, saue only ye shall leaue the head and feet, and then let him goe his way to seek his fortune: and forthwith, when ye haue the skinne hotte and warme, ye shall bind it about your body, and ere long time be passed, your health shall be restored to you againe, and you shall be whole as you were before. And then the Fox took his leaue of the King, and departed thence again vnto his tarriar. Soon after came the Wolfe to see the Lion, and incontinent the Lion called the Wolfe to counsell, and fastened softly his foot on him, and dispoiled the Wolfe of all his skin saue only his head and feet, and after the Lion bound it all warme about his belly, and the Wolfe ran a way skinnles, wherfore he had not enough to defend him from the flies, which vered him very sore, and for the great distresse that he felt because of the Flies that ate his flesh, he was wood, and ran vnder a hill vpon the which the Fox was. And when the Fox saw him, he began to laugh and mock at the Wolfe, saying aloud, who art thou that passest there with such a faire hood on thy head: and with right faire gloues on thy hands, and shooes on thy feet: Stay, stay a while and hearken what I shall say to thee. When thou wentest and camest before the Kings house, thou wert blessed of the Lord, and when thou wast at the Court, thou hadst many good words, and good talking of all the world. And therfore my Golsip, be it euill or good, thou must let all passe, and haue patience in thine aduersity. This fable sheweth vnto vs, that if any hurt, or endamaged by some other, he must not auenge himselfe by his tongue, for to make any treason, ne for to say of them any harm or blasphemy, for we ought to consider that whosoener maketh the pit ready for his brother, oft it hapneth, that he himselfe falleth in the same, and is beaten with the same rod he made for another.

Of the Wolfe which let a fart.

IT is folly to think more then a man ought to do, for whatsoeuer a foole thinketh, it seemeth to him that it shall be so: As it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe, which somtime rose early in the morning, and after he was risen from his couch, he retched himselfe and let a great fart, and began to say to himselfe, thanked be the gods for these good tydings, this day I shall be fortunate and happy, as mine arse singeth to me. And then he departed from his lodging, and began to walk abroad. And as he went on his way, he found a sack full of tallow which a woman had let fall, and with his foot he turned it upside down, saying to himselfe, I shall not eate thee, for thou shouldest hurt my tender stomach, I shall fare this day more delicious, and far better I know it well, for mine arse did sing so to me. And with these words he went his way, and anon after he found a great peece of Bacon well salted, which he turned upside downe, and when he had turned and tossed it enough, he said, I disdain to eate of this meat, because it would make me drinke to much, for it is salt: and as mine arse sang to me lately, I shall eat this day better and more delicious meate: and then he began to walk further, and as he entred into a faire medow, he saw a mare and her foale with her, and said to himselfe, I render thanks vnto the gods, for the goodnesse that they send me, for well I wist, and was certain that this day I should find some precious meate. Then he came nere the Mare and said to her, Certainly sister I must eat thy child. And the Mare said, Do my brother what shall please thee, but first I pray thee do me one pleasure, I haue often heard say, that thou art a good Chirurgion, therefore I desire thee that thou wilt help my foot, for as I passed yester day through the Forrest, a thorne entred into my foot behind, which grieneth me very sore, I pray thee therefore before thou eat my foale to pull the same out

out of my foot. And the wolfe said, That shall I gladly do good Sister, shew me thy foot, and as the Mare shewed the Wolfe her foot she gaue him such a stroake betwixt the eyes, that he was astonied and fell flat to the ground, and by this meanes was her foale saued: and a long time after, was the Wolfe lying vpon the earth for dead, and when he was come again to himselfe, and that he could speak he said I care not for this mishap, for well I wot that yet this day I shall eat and be well filled with delicious meat: and in uttering these words he lifted vp himselfe, and so departed. And hauing walked a space, he found (by chance) a couple of rams fighting in a meddow, that with their horns smote each other. Then the Wolfe said within himselfe: Blessed be God that now I shall bee thoroughly satisfied. He then came nere the two Rams and said, Certainly I shall eat one of you. And one of them said vnto him, My Lord do all that pleaseeth you, but first you must giue a sentence of a proesse of law which is betwixt us: and the Wolfe answered, That with right good will he would do it: And after said vnto them, my Lords tell me your cases, that I may the better giue sentence of your difference and question: And then one of them began to say, My Lord, This Meadow was belonging to our Father, and because he died without making any ordinance or testament, we be now in debate and strife for the parting of it: wherefore we pray thee that thou wouldest make an accord betwixt vs, so that peace may be one either side. And when the Wolfe demanded of the Rams, how their question might be accorded? Right well, said one of them, by the way that I shall tell thee, if thou wilt heare me. We will be at the two ends of the meddow, and thou shalt be in the midst of it, and from the end of the meddow we both shall run toward you and he that shall come first to you, shall be Lord of this meddow, and the last shall be thine. Well said the wolfe, thine

thine advice is good, and well proposed : Let us see now who shall first come to me. Then went the two Rams to the end of the meadow, and both at once began to run toward the Wolfe, and with all their might came and gave two such vehement strokes both at once against both his sides, that almost they brake his heart within his belly, and there fell downe the poore wolfe all astonied, and the rams went their way. And when he was come again to himselfe, he took courage, and departed, saying thus to himselfe, Yet shall I this day eat some good dainty meat. He had not long walked but he found a Sow and her small pigs with her, and incontinent as soone as he saw her he said : Thanks be to the Gods that I shall this day eat and fill my belly with good meat, and shall have good luck; and in saying that he approached to the Sow, and said to her, My sister, I must eat some of thy young pigs : and the Sow said to him, My Lord, I am content, eat what shall please you, but ere you eat, I pray that they may be baptized, and made cleane in pure and faire water : and the Wolfe said, Show me the water, and I will wash and baptize them well : then the Sow led him to a river where was a fair mill, and as the wolfe was upon a litle bridge of the said mill, and that he would have taken a pig, the Sow thrust the Wolfe in to the water with her head ; and for the swiftnes of the water, he must needs passe under the wheele of the said mill, but God knowes whether the wings of the mill did beat him well or not; yet as soone as he might, he ran his way, and as he ran he said to himselfe, I care not for so litle shame, sth I shall eat my belly full of delicious meat, as mine arse did sing early to me. And as he passed through the street he saw some sheepe, and as the Sheep saw him, they entred into a stable, and when the Wolfe came there, he said unto them in this manner, God save you my sisters, I must eat one of you, to the end that my great hunger may
be

be fully satisfied. Then said they vnto him, Certainly my Lord, you are welcome to Masse, for we be come hither to obserue a great solemnity, and therefore we desire you that you pontifically would sing, and after the Service compleat and finished, do your pleasure with one of vs. The Wolfe for vaine glory, faining to be a Prelate, began to sing and howle aloud before the sheep: and when the men of the towne heard the voice of the wolfe, they came into the stable with great stauces, and so layd vpon the Wolfe that he could hardly go: neuerthelesse, he escaped, and went vnder a great tree, vpon which tree stood a man that helued down the boughes thereof. The wolfe then began to sigh sore and to make great sorrow for his euill hap and said: Ah Iupiter. How many euills haue I had and escaped: But now I know it is long of my selfe and mine own means and proud thoughts; for this day in the morning I found a sack full of Tallow which I disdained, and anon after that a peece of bacon, which I would not eat for fear of great thirst, and because of foolish conceit: so that the euill that happeneth to me is rightly bestowed. My father was neuer Physitian, nor Leach, neither haue I euer studied or learned the Science of Physick; therefore if there hapned any euill to me when I would haue drawn the thorne out of the Mares foot, it is well imploied. Also my Father was neither patriarke nor bishop, nor euer knew one letter in the book, and yet I presumed and tooke vpon me to do sacrifice, and to sing before the gods, faining my selfe a Prelate; but after my deserving I was well rewarded: also my father was neuer Lawyer nor Justice, and yet I would take vpon me to be a great Justice. But I knew neuer neither A. ne B. and therefore the euill that is come to me is most right. O Iupiter, I am worthy of a very great punishment for my offences. Send thou now to me from thy high throne a sword or other weapon, where-
with

with I may strongly punish and beat my self by great
 penance; for well worthy am I to receive a greater
 punishment. Now the good man being upon the tree,
 and hearing all these words of the Wolfe, said no
 thing. And when the Wolfe had made an end of his
 sighings and complaints, the good man took his axe
 wherewith he had cut away the dead branches of the
 tree, and cast it upon the Wolfe, and it fell upon his
 back in such manner that the Wolfe turned upside-
 down with his feet upward, in such sort that he lay as
 if he had bin stark dead. And after he was revived
 again, he looked up toward heaven, and began thus to
 cry out, O Jupiter, I now see well that thou hast heard
 my prayer. And by earnest looking up, he espied the
 man that sat in the tree, and thinking him to be Iupi-
 ter, he presently fled toward the forest as fast as he
 could; being very sore hurt and wounded: and ever af-
 ter he became more meek and humble, than before he
 was fierce and proud. By this fable men may see, that
 many things fall out which a foole thinketh not on.
 And it sheweth to us, that when any little good hap-
 peth unto us, we ought not to refuse it in hope of bet-
 ter fortune: it likewise sheweth that none are to take
 upon them to do that which they have no skill to do.

Of the envious Dogge.

No man ought to have envy at other mens good
 fortune, as appeareth by this fable of an envious
 dog which went into a stable of Dren, because that they
 should not enter in for to eat of the hay. And then the
 Dren said unto him, Thou art enill and peruerse to
 have envie of other mens good, the which is to us need-
 full and profitable; for thy kind is not to eat hay. And
 thus he did of a great bone which he held in his mouth;
 he would not leane it, because of the envy of another
 dog being hard by. This fable therefore teacheth us,

that it becometh every one to keepe himselfe from the company of an enuious person.

Of the Wolfe and the hungry Dogge.

THere be some that thinke to win which often happen to losse, for it is commonly said, that as much spendeth the niggard as the liberall, as it appeareth by this fable, of a man which had a great flock of sheep, and also he had a dog for to keepe them from the Wolves. To this dog he gave no meat for the great avarice that he had, and therefore the Wolfe on a day came to the Dog, and demanded of him the reason why he was so leane, and said unto him, I see well that thou art ready to starue through hunger by reason that thy master giveth thee no meat by his scarcity, but if thou wilt beleue me, I shall give thee good counsell. And the Dog said to him, Certainly I lack greatly good counsell. Then the Wolfe said to him, What shalt thou do, Let me take a Lambe, and when I shall haue it, I shall run away, and when thou seest me, make semblance to run after me, and saue thy selfe that thou canst not overtake me for lack and default of meat, which maketh thee so feeble. And thus when the Shepheard shall see that thou maiest not run because of thy great feebleness and debilitie of body, he shall tell thy Lord that thou maiest not recover the Lambe because thou art so lean and hungry, and by this mean thou shalt haue thy belly full of meat. The dog then agreed with the Wolfe, and each of them did as a before said. And when the Shepheard saw the dog fall, he concluded well that hunger was the cause of it; for the which cause when he came home he told his master, and he understood it, he said as a man worthy to haue, I will that from hence forth you give him bread enough, and then every day the same dog, had sops of bread & due bread enough, whereby he got strength and

and wiser again. It hapned within a while after, that the Wolfe came again to the Dog and said to him, I perceriue well that I gaue thee good counsell. And the dog said to the Wolfe, My Brother thou sayest truth, wherefore I thank thee much, for of it I had great need. And then the Wolfe said to him, if thou wilt, I shall giue thee yet better counsell. And the Dog answered him, With a very good will I shall heare it, and if it be good I shall do after it. Then said the Wolfe to him, Giue me leaue to take another Lamb, and do thou run after me for to haue it from me, and to bite me, and I shall violently overthrow thee with thy feet upward as he that hath no puissance & strength, and yet notwithstanding all this, I will not hurt thee beleene me hardly, and good shall hap to thee. And when the masters servants shall haue seen thy diligence they shall shew thy master, how that thou shalt keep full well his fold, if thou be well rewarded. And And then the Dogge answered the Wolfe, that he was content. And as it was said, right so it was done, and both of them made good diligence: the Wolfe ran away with the Lamb, and the Dog ran after and overtooke him and bit him faintly, and the Wolfe overthrow the Dogge upside down to the ground. And when the Shepheard saw the Wolfe giue such stroaks vpon the Dogge, the Shepheard said certainly doe haue a good Dogge, we must tell his diligence to our Master, and how he bit the Wolfe, and how he was overthrowen, and yet said certainly, if he had euer meat enough, the Wolfe had not borne away the Lamb. Then the Lord commanded to giue him plenty of meat, whereof the Dogge took again all his strength: And within a while after, the Wolfe came again to the Dogge, and said vnto him in this manner, My brother, haue I not giuen to thee good counsell? And the Dogge said, Certainly thou hast, for which I thank thee. Then the Wolfe said to the Dog,

I pray thee my brother, that thou wilt yet giue me another Lamb. And the dog said to him, certainly my brother it may suffice thee to haue had two of them. Then said the Wolfe, at the least thou maiest let me haue one for my labour and salary. That shalt thou not, said the Dog, hast thou not had good salary for to haue had two Lambs of my Masters? And the wolfe answered to him again, My brother, giue it me if it please thee. And the dog said, nay I will not, and if thou takest it against my will, I promise thee, that neuer after this time thou shalt eat any more. And the Wolfe said, Alas my brother, I dy for hunger, tell me for Gods loue what shal I do. Then the dog said to him, I shall confesse thee well; a wall of my masters celler is fallen down, go thou thither this night and enter into it, and there thou maist bothe eat and drinke at thy pleasure; for both bread, flesh and wine shalt thou find there in great plenty. Then the wolfe said to the dog, Alas my brother, beware I pray thee that thou accuse me not, ne deceiue me. And the dog answered I warrant thee, but look thou do thy feat so priuily that none of my fellowes know of it. And the wolfe came at night and entred into the celler, and eat and drank, at his pleasure, insomuch that he waxed drunk, and when he was drunk he said to himselfe; When the villaines be filled with meat, and that they be drunk, they sing, and wherfore should not I sing? And anon he began to cry and howle. Then the dogs heard his voyce and began to bark and howle, and the seruants which heard them, said surely, It is the Wolfe which is entred wisthin the celler, and they altogether went thither and killed the Wolfe. Wherfore, more dispendeth the niggard than the bountifull, for couetousnesse was neuer good; for many there be which dare not eat and drinke as nature requireth, but neuerthelesse, euery one ought to liue prudently, of all such goods as pleaseth God to send them. This fable sheweth also to vs that

that none ought to do against his kind, as the Wolfe, which wared drunke, for the which cause hee was slain.

Of the Father and his three Children.

HE is not wise which for to haue vanity and his pleasure, maketh debate and strife: As it appears by this fable, There was a man which had three children, and at the houre of death he bequeathed and gaue them his heritage, that is to wit, a Pearetree, a Goat, and a Mill. And when the Father was dead, the brethren assembled themselues together and went before the Judge, for to part the liuelihood, and said to the Judge, my Lord, Our Father is dead, and hath bequeathed vnto vs three brethren all his heritage, and one should haue as much of it as the other. And then the Judge demanded what was their liuelihood? And they answered, A Peartree, a Goate, and a Mill. And then the Judge said to them. That he that should sit and diuide equall your parts for the one to haue as much of it as another, should haue a very hard matter to do; but by your owne aduice how would you haue it? and then the eldest of the three brethren spake and said, I shall take from the Peartree all that is crooked and right, and the second said I shall take from the Peartree all is greene and dry. And the third said, I shall haue all the root, the pill or mast, and all the branches of the Peartree; and the Judge said to them: He that then shall haue the most part of it, let him be Iudg, for neither I nor any else can vnderstand or knowe who shall thereby haue the most or least part of it, and therefore he that can proue openly; that he hath the most part, shall be Lord of the whole Tree. Then the Judge demanded of them, how their Father had demised to them the Goat? And they sayed to him, He that shall make fairest prayer

and request must haue the Goat. And then the first brother made his request and said, would God that the Goat were now so great, that he might drinke all the water which is vnder the cope of heauen, and when he had drunk it, he should be yet more thirsty. The second said, I suppose that the goate shall be mine for a fairer demand and request then thine is I shall now make : I would that all the Hempe and Flaxe, and all the wooll in the world were made into one thred alone, and that the Goat were so great, that with the same thred men might not bind one of the legs. Then said the third. The Goate shall surely be mine, for I would that he were so great, that if an Eagle were at the vppermost part of heauen, he might occupie and haue there as much place as the Eagle might looke on in height length and breadeth. And then the Judge said which of you three haue made the fairest prayer, Certainly neither I nor any other can giue the iudgment, and therefore the Goate shall be to him that of it shall say the truth. And the Will, how was it demised by your Father to be parted among you three ? They answered the Judge, he that shall be the most lyar, most euill, and most sloth, ought to haue it. Then said the eldest son : I am most slothfull, for many yeares past I haue dwelled in a great house, and lay vnder the conduits of the same, where fell vpon me all the foule waters : as pisse, dish-water, and other filth, that most wonderfully stanke, in somuch that all my flesh was rotten thereof, and mine eyes blind, and the dirt vnder my back was a foot high, and yet by sloth I had rather abide there than rise vp. The second said, suppose that the Will shall be mine, for if I came to a table couered with all manner of delicate meats wherof I might eat if I would take of the best, I am so slothfull that I may not eat, without one should put the meat in my mouth. The third said, The Will shall be mine, for I am yet a greater lyar, and
more

more slothfull than any of you both, for if I had thirst vnto the death, and if I found then my selfe within a faire water, vp to the neck I would rather dye then moue my selfe to drinke one drop therof. Then said the Judge, He wot not what y^e say, for neither I, nor any other may well vnderstand you, but the cause I remit among you. And thus they went without any sentence, for to a foolish demand belongeth a foolish answer; & they see they be fooles that will plead in such sort one against another, for to a small matter belongeth a small plea.

Of the Wolfe and the Fox.

NOne may be master, except first he haue bin a disciple. As it appeareth by this Fable of a Fox which came to a wolfe, and said to him, my Lord, I pray vs that he will be my Cossip. And the wolfe answered, I am content: And the Fox took him his son, praying him that he should learn his son good doctrine, the which the wolfe took, and went with him vpon a mountaine and said to the little Fox, when the beasts come to the field, call me. And the Fox went and saw from the top of a high hill how all the beasts were coming to the field, wherfore he called his Godfather and said, My Godfather, the beasts come into the field. And the Wolfe demanded of him what beasts they were. The Fox answered, There be both kine and swine together. Well said the Wolfe, I care not for them let them go, for the dogs be with them. Soon after the Fox looked on the other side, and perceiued a Mare which went to the fields, and he went to his Godfather and said, Godfather, a Mare is gone to the fields. And the Wolfe demanded of him whereabout is she? And the Fox answered she is by the forrest: and the Wolfe said now go we to dinner: and the Wolfe with his Godsonne went into the forrest, and came to the Mare and perceiued a Colt by her. Then the

the Wolfe tooke the Colt by the neck, and drew him into the wood, and deuoured him betwē them both: and when they had well eaten, the godsonne said to the Godfather, My Godfather, I commend you to God; and much I thank you for your good doctrine, for ye haue taught me well, insomuch that now I am a good cleark, and now I will go to my Mother. Then the Wolfe said to his Godsonne, My Godson, if thou goest away thou shalt repent thee, for thou hast not yet well studied neither knowest thou yet thy syllogismes. Ha my good Godfather, said the For, I know well all. Then the Wolfe said to him, Sith thou wilt needs go, to God I commend thee. And when the For was come to his mother, she said to him; surely thou hast not studied enough, and then he said to his mother I am so great a Clark, that I can cast the diuell from the Clift, Come let vs goe chase, and ye shall see whether I can do ought or nought. And the young Fore would haue done as his godfather the wolfe did, and said to his mother, Make a good watch, and when the beasts shall come to the field, let me haue knowledge thereof. And his mother said well so shall I do. She made good watch, and when she saw the Kine and the Swine go to the field, she said vnto him, My sonne, the Kine and Swine go together into the fields: and he answered: My mother, for them I care not, let them go, for the Dogs keepe them well: and within a short while after, the mother saw the Mare come next vnto the wood, and said vnto her son, My son, the Mare is nere vnto the wood: and he answered, My mother, these be good tydings, abide you here, for I go to fetch our dinner, add he entred into the wood, and after would do as his godfather had done before, and went and tooke the Mare by the neck; but the Mare tooke him with her teeth and bare him to the shepheard, and the mother cried from the top of the hill, My sonne, let go the Mare and come hither againe, but he might not

not, for the Mare held him fast with her teeth: and as the Shepheard came to kill him, the mother cried, and said weeping: Alas my sonne thou didst not learne and hast been too little a while at Schoole, wherefore for thy foolish presumption, thou must dye miserably: And the Shepheard tooke and slew him. Which fable sheweth, that none ought to make himselfe learned except he haue first well studied; for some thinke themselues to be great Clearks, that can do nothing clearkly.

Of a man, The old Lion, and his
sonne.

HE that refuseth the good doctrine of his Father, if euil hap come vnto him, it is both right and reason, as this Fable rehearseth vnto vs: Of a Labourer which sometime liued in a Desert, by his culturing labour. In this desert also liued a Lion that wasted and destroyed all the seed that euery day the said labourer had sowed: and also this Lion destroyed and spoiled his trees. And because he did to him so great harm, he made a hedge, to the which he set cords and nets to take the Lion. And on a certain time, the Lion came to eat corn, and entred within a net, and was taken; and then the labourer came thither, and beat him so wonderfully, that scarcely he could escap away with life: and because that the Lion saw that he might not escape the subtilty of the man, he took his young Lion and went and dwelt in another region. And within a while after, when the young Lion was grown, and was fierce, and strong, he demanded of his Father, and said; my Father, be we of this Region? Nay, said the Father, for we be fled away from our land. And the young Lion demanded of him wherefore? And the Father answered him, for the great subtilty & crafty deuices of the Man. And the young Lion demanded of him, what man it was? And

And his Father answered and said vnto him; he is nothing so great, nor so strong as we be, but he is far more subtil and ingenious then we be, making snars to take vs. And the sonne answered to the father, I shall go and avenge me on him. And the great Lion said to him, Go not, for if thou goest thither, thou shalt repent thee thereof, and shalt do like a foole. And the son answered the Father. By mine head I shall go thither, and see what he can do. And as he went to find the man he met an Oxe within a meddow, and an horse whose back was all slain and sore, to whom he said in this manner, Who is he that hath led you hither, and that so hath hurt you? And they said to him, it is the man. And he said to them, Certainly this is a marvelous thing. I pray you that ye will let me see him. Then they departed and shewed him the Labourer as he eared the earth, and the Lion without uttering any words passed toward the man, to whom he spake in this manner, Oa man, thou hast done ouer many euills both to me and to my father, and likewise to our beasts: Therefore I tell thee that to me thou must do right. And the man said I advise thee to take heed, for and if thou comest too near me, I shall kill thee with this great club, and after with this knife I shall slea thee. And the Lion said Come before my father and he as king shall do to vs good iustice. And the man said, I am content if thou wilt swear to me, that thou wilt not touch me untill we be in presence of thy father, and also I shall swear vnto thee, that I shall go with thee into the presence of thy father. Thus the Lion and the man beganne to go together by the way, where his cords and nets had been set: and as they passed by the Lion fell into a cord, and by the feet he was taken, so that he could go no further: then he said, to the man, O I pray thee that thou wilt help me, for I may not go. And the man answered to him, I may not, for I haue sworn vnto thee that I will not touch thee

thee untill we come before thy father. And as the Lyon supposed to have unbound himselfe for to scape, he fell into another snare. And then he beganne to cry after the man, saying, O good man, I pray thee vnto bind me. But the man began to strike him vpon the head: and when the Lyon saw that he might not escape, he said to the man, I pray thee that thou smite me no more vpon the head, but vpon the ears, because I would not heare the counsell of my father. And the man began to smite him at the heart and slew him. Therefore wee see, that vnto disobedient children, many times misfortune befallerh.

Of the Knight and his seruant which found
the Foxe,

MAny there be that for their great leasing suppose to put vnder all the World, but euer at the last their leasings be known, as appeareth by this fable, of a Knight which went with an Archer of his through the land, and as they rode they found a For, and the Knight said to the Archer. In good sooth I see a great For. And the Archer said, My Lord, marnell you therat: I haue been in the region whereas the Foxes be as great as Oren. And the Knight said, In good sooth their skins were good to make mantles with, if skinniers might haue them. And as they were riding they fell into many words and devices, and because the the Knight perceiued well the leasing of the Archer, he began to make prayers to the gods for to make his Archer afraid, and said in this manner, O Iupiter thou great god, I pray thee that this day thou wilt keepe vs from leasing, so that wee may passe safe this great river which is here betwixt vs, and that we may safely come to our house. And when the Archer heard the prayer of his Lord, he was greatly abashed, and demanded of his Lord, wherefore he prayed so aboutly.

ly. And the Knight answered, Wottest thou not well that thou must soon passe a great river, and that he who all this day shall haue made one leasing, if he enter in, he shall neuer come out again? Of which words the archer was very dreadfull. And when they had ridden a little way they found a little riuer. Wherefore the archer demanded of his Lord, Is this the flood which we must passe? So said the Knight, it is greater. O my Lord, I say so, because that the For which you saw might well haue swimmned ouer this little water. And the Lord said, I care not the refore. And after they had ridden a little further, they found another little riuer, and the archer demanded of him, Is this the flood that ye spake of? Nay said he, for it is greater and broader. And the Archer said againe to him: My Lord, I say so, because the For of the which I spake to day, was no greater then a Calfe: and then the Knight hearing the dissimulation of the archer, answered not: and so they rode forth along, till they found yet another riuer. And then the Archer demanded of his Lord, is that the same? Nay said the Knight, but soon we shall come thereto. O my Lord, quoth he, I ask, because that the For whereof I spake to you this day, was no greater then a sheep: and when they had ridden till euening, they found a riuer of great breadth, and when the Archer saw it, he began to shake for fear, and demanded of his Lord, My Lord, is this the Riuer? Yea said the Knight. O my Lord, said he, I assure you on my faith, that the For of the which I spake to day, was no greater then the For which we saw to day, wherefore I confesse to you my sinne. And then the Knight began to smile, and said to his Archer in this manner: this riuer also is no worse then the riuers which we saw before and haue passed through. Then the archer was ashamed, because he might no more couer his leasing. Wherefore it is good euer to say the truth, and to practise honest dealing both in word and deed, for the false speeches

speeches of a lyar procure his own shame and contempt among men.

Of the Eagle and the Raven.

NOne ought to take vpon him for to do a thing which is perilous, except he know himselfe to be able to do it, as appeareth by this fable. An Eagle by flying tooke a Lambe, whereof the Raven had great enuy, and said to himselfe, Wherefore should not I take a Lambe as well as the Eagle? And shortly after, as the Raven saw a great flock of shep passe along by him, he descended very proudly and outrageously on them; and in such manner smot a wether that the clawes abode in the flesh, by reason whereof he could not flye away. Then the Shepheard came and brake his wings, and tooke him, and after beare him to his children to play withall, and they demanded of him what bird he was. And the Raven answered to them, I supposed to haue been an Eagle, and by my ouer-weening, I thought to haue taken a Lambe as the Eagle did. But now I know well that I am a Raven. Wherefore the feeble ought not to compare with the strong; for sometime when he suppoeth to do more then he may, he falleth thereby into great dishonor, as appeareth by this present fable of the Raven which supposed himselfe to be as strong as the Eagle,

Of the Eagle and the Wesill.

No man what might soeuer he hath, ought to dispraise another, as appeareth by this present fable, of an Eagle which chased sometime after an Hare, and because that the Hare might not resist against the Eagle, he demanded ayd and help of the Wesill, which tooke her in her keeping, and because the Eagle saw the Wesill so little, hee dispraised her, and by force tooke

tooke away the Ware, wherat the Wenefill was wroth,
and went and beheld the nest of the Eagle which was
upon a high tree, and seeing it, climed vp into the tree
and cast down the young Eagles whereof they died.
And for this cause the Eagle was angry, and went
with Iupiter, praying him that he would find him a
sure place where he might lay his egges into his little
chickins, and Iupiter did grant it, and withall gaue him
such a gift, that when the time of chiding should come,
he should make her young ones without his bosome.
When the Wenefill knew this, he gathered together a
great quantity of ordure or filth; and thereof made
a high hill, for to let her selfe fall from the top of it
into the bosome of Iupiter, and when Iupiter felt the
filth, he began to shake his bosome, and both the wenefill
and the eggs of the Eagle fell downe to the ground, and
thus were all the egges broken and lost: And when the
eagle knew it, he made a vowe that he would neuer
make any Eagle, until he were thereof assured.
And therefore none, how mighty and strong he be,
ought to despise another, for there is none so sim-
ple, but that he may auenge himselfe either vpon
another.

Of the Fox and the Goate.

HE which is wise, ought to consider the end before
he begin any work, as appeareth by this Fable of
a Fox and a Goate which sometime descended into a
deep Well for to drink, and when they had drunk, be-
cause they could not come vp againe, the Fox said to
the Goate, My friend, if thou wilt help me, we shall be
sane both out of this Well: for if thou wilt set thy side
feet against the wall, I shall well leape vpon thee, and
then I shall leape out of the Well: and when I shall be
out of it, thou shalt take me by the hand, and I shall
draw thee out of the Well. And vnto this thing the
Goate

Goat accorded, and said I will. And then the Goat
lift vp his feet against the wall, and the Fox did so
much as by his subtilty that he got out of the Well,
and when he was out, he began to look down vpon the
Goate which was within the Well. And the Goat
said vnto him, help me now as thou hast promised.
But the Fox began to laugh at him, saying: O mis-
ster Goat, if thou hadst bin wise according to the gra-
uity of thy faire beard, thou wouldest ere now thou
haddest entred into this well, haue taken his hoo
thou shouldest come forth of it again. Wherefore he
that will wisely gouern himselfe, ought neuer to take
heed to the end of the work.

Of the Cat and the Chicken.

HE that is false by nature, and hath begun to de-
ceiue others, will use his craft still, as it appereth
by this present fable. A Cat there was that some-
time tooke a Chicken, the which he began very great-
ly to blame, vnto that he might pick a quarrell and eat
him, saying vnto him after this manner: Goate hather
little chicken, thou dost no good but cry all the night,
and keepest me thereby from sleeping. And the chick-
en answered, I do it for my great profit. Then the
Cat said to him, For which is that, thou art an in-
stigious leacher, for thou knowest naturally both the
mother and the daughter: and the Chicken said, I do
it that my master may haue eggs for his eating, and
my master for his profit, gaue to me both mother and
daughter for to multiply the eggs. Then the Cat said
to him, By my faith gospe thou hast excused thyselfe,
but nevertheless thou shalt passe through my snare,
for I purpose not to eat this day for all thy words.
Thus it is of him that is accustomed to lye by others,
for he cannot abstaine from it, for all the excuses that
may be made.

Of the Fox and the Bush.

MEN ought not to ask helpe of them that be moze accustomed to do euill than good, as it appeareth by this Fable. There was a Fox which for to escape the perill to be taken, trod vpon a thorne which did hurt him sore, wherefore weeping he said to the bush, I am come to thee as my refuge, and thou hast sore hurt me. And the bush said to him, Thou hast erred and beguiled thy self, for thou supposedst to haue taken me as thou dost hens and chickens. And therefore men ought not to help them which be accustomed to do euill, but ought rather to hinder them.

Of the Man and his Idoll.

OF the euill man sometime commeth profit to some other, though it be contrary to his will, as appeareth by this fable: of a man which had in his house an Idoll, which he often times adored as his God, and the moze he prayed to him, the moze he failed and became poore, wherefore the man was angry at his Idoll, and toke it by the legges, and smote the head of it so strongly against the wall, that it brak all to peeces, out of which Idoll issued a great treasure, whereof the man was glad and topfull. And the man said to the Idoll, Now know I well that thou art wicked, euill and peruerse, for when I worshipped thee thou didst nought for me. Therefore when euill men do good, it is against their will.

Of a Fisher.

ONCE a Fisher piped for to make the fish dance: and when he saw that for no song he could pipe they would dance, he waxed angry, and cast his nets into the water, and took great store of fish, and when he had drawn his nets to land, the fish began to leap and dance, and then he said vnto them: Certainly it appeareth

appeareth now well that ye be very euill beasts, for now when ye be taken, ye leap and dance, and before when I piped on my Bagpipe, I could not get you to dance. Therefore it appeareth well that those things which be done in season, be well done; and by good advice,

Of the Cat and the Rat.

THe man that is wise and hath once been beguiled, will no more trust him that hath beguiled him, as rehearseth this Fable, of a Cat that went into a house where many Rats were, which he did eat one after another. And when the Rats perceiued the fiercenes and cruelty of the Cat, they held a counsell together, where as they determined with one consent, that they should no more come vpon the lower ground. Therefore one of them most ancient, said to all the other, My brethren, we know against whom we may not resist, therefore we must needs hold our selues vpon the vpper balikes, to the end our enemy may not take vs: of the which words the other Rats were well content, and agreed to his counsell. And when the Cat knew the counsell of the Rats, he hung himselfe by his two feet behind, vpon a pin of iron which did stick in a balke, setting himselfe to be dead. Then one of the Rats looking downward, and seeing the Cat so hanging, began to laugh, and said to the Cat, O my friend, if I knew that thou wert dead, I would come down, but I know thee to be false, and doest but hang so counterfeiting thy selfe to be dead, therefore I will not goe down. By which we learn, not to trust him the second time, which hath deceiued vs once.

Of the labourer and the Pielarge.

HE which is taken with the wicked and euill, ought to suffer like paine and punishment. As it:

it appeareth by this fable: Of a Labourer which sometime dressed and set gins for to take the Gæse, and also the Cranes which did eat his Corn. It hapned that once in a morning he took a great many of Gæse and Cranes, and a Pelarge among them, which earnestly prayed the Labourer to let him go, saying, that he came not thither to do any harme. At these words the Labourer began to laugh, and said to the Pelarg, if thou hadst not been in their fellowship, thou hadst not entred into my net, nor been taken; but because thou art found and taken with them, thou shalt be punished as they be. Wherefore none ought to keep company with such as do euill, vnlesse he be willing to be punished as they be for their bad conditions.

Of the Child which kept the sheep.

The man which is accustomed to make leasings, shall not be beleued when he telleth the truth, as rehearseth this present fable, of a child which sometime kept sheep, the which cried oft without cause, saying, Alas for Gods loue succour me, for the Wolfe will eat my sheep. And when the Labourers that cultered and eared the earth thereabouts heard his crye, they came to him, and did so very often and found nothing. & as they saw that there was no Wolues, they returned againe to their otion labour. Notwithstanding, it hapned on a day that the Wolfe came indeed, and the child cried as he was accustomed to do, and because that the labourers had been oftentimes deceived, they kept their worke still, and supposed that it was not truth, by reason whereof the Wolfe ranne away with one of the sheepe. Thus we see, that men will not lightly beleene him that is knowne for a lyar.

Of

NOne ought to be ingratfull for the benefits which he receiveth of another, as rehearseth this Fable, of an Ant which came to a Fountaine to drinke, and as she would haue drunke, she fell into the Fountaine, wherein she thought to haue been drowned without helpe, and the Columbe took a branch of a tree, and cast it to saue her, and then the Ant went anon vpon the branch, and saved her selfe. Then came the Falconer which would haue taken the said Columbe, and the Ant seeing the Falconer preparing his nets, came to his foot, and so fast pricked him, that he caused him to smite the earth with his foot, and thereby made so great a noise that the Columbe heard it, and withall flew away before the gins and nets were set. Wherefore none ought to forget the benefit which he hath receiued of some other: for ingratitude is a great sin.

Of the Bee and Iupiter.

The euill that a man doeth to another, commeth to himselfe, as appeareth by this Fable, of a Bee which offered vnto Iupiter a peece of Honey, whereof Iupiter was much ioyfull, and said to the Bee, demand of me what thou wilt, and I shall giue it thee. Then the Bee prayed him in this manner, O Iupiter, I pray thee that thou wilt grant me that whosoever shall come to take away my Honey, if I sting him he may suddenly dye. And because Iupiter loued the humane kinde, he said to the Bee, Let it suffice thee, that whosoever shall take thy Honey, if thou sting or prick him, incontinent thou shalt die: and thus her request was turned to her own harme. Wherefore men ought not to demand of God any thing that is dishonest or vnjust.

Of the Carpenter and of Mercury.

By how much God is more mercifull and benigne to the good and holy, so much the more he punisheth the wicked and euill, as we may see by this fable, of a Carpenter which cut wood by a river to make a Temple to the gods. And as he cut wood, his Axe fell into the water, wherefore he began to weep, and to call to the gods for helpe: and the god Mercury for pity appeared to him, and asked him wherefore he wept, And shewed vnto him an Axe of gold, and asked of him if that were the Axe which he had lost. And he said nay: then the God shewed him another Axe of siluer, and he semblably said: and because Mercury saw that he was good and true, he drew his Axe out of the water, and gaue it him, and much good beside he gaue him. And the Carpenter told this story to his fellowes, of the which one of them came to the same place to cut as his fellow did before, and let fall his Axe into the water and began to weep, and to demand help and ayd of the gods. Whereupon Mercury appeared before him, and shewed to him an Axe of gold, and demanded of him saying, Is this same it that thou hast lost? And he answered to Mercury and said, Yea saye Sir and mighty God, that same is it: and Mercury seeing the malice of the villaine, gaue to him neither the one nor the other, but left him weeping for his owne Axe. Thus God which is good and iust, rewardeth all good men in this world, euery one after his deseruing, and punisheth the euill and vniust.

Of the young theefe and his Mother.

The child which is not chastised in the beginning will proue euill and peruerse in the end: as we may perceiue by this fable. There was a young child which

which in his youth began to steale, and all that he did steale he brought to his mother, and the mother took it gladly, and would in no wise correct him, and after he had stollen many things, he was taken and condemned to be hanged, and as men led him to the Justice, his mother followed him and wept sore: And then the child prayed the Justice that he might say somewhat to his mother, and hauing leaue he approached to her, and making as though he would speake to her in her eare, with his teeth he bit off her nose: so: which when the Judge blamed him, he answered him in this manner, My Lord, she is the cause of my death, for if she had well chastised me, I had not come to this shame. By which fable we may learn that it is better for parents to chastise their children being young, then to be grieved by them when they are old.

Of the Flea and the Man.

Every little euill is to be punished, as appeareth by this fable. There was a man which tooke a flea that bit him, to whom he said: Flea, why bittest thou me, and wilt not let me sleep: And the flea answered, It is my kind to do so. Wherefore I pray thee put me not to death. And the man beganne to laugh and said, Thou canst not hurt me greatly, neuerthelesse, only for biting me, thou shalt die. Therefore small euills are not to be suffered.

Of the Husbandman and his two Wives.

Nothing is worse to a man then a woman, as appeareth by this fable. There was a man of mean age that had two wiues, that is to say, an old and a young, which were both dwelling in his house, and because the old desired to haue his loue she pulled the blacke haire from his head, because hee should be

the more like to her : and the young woman on the other side pulled out all the white haire, to the end that he should seeme the yonger, and more fair in her sight. And thus the good man abode without any hair on his head. And therefore it is great folly for an ancient man to marry againe : or for any man to place his affections on two women at once, and to seek to please them both.

Of the Labourer and his children.

HE that laboureth continually, is likely to be rich in substance, as appeareth by this fable : There was a labouring man which had diligently wrought all his life time, and was thereby waken rich, and when he should die, he said to his children, My treasure I haue left in my Vine : And after that this good man was dead, his children supposing that this good man was dead, his children supposing that this treasure had bin hid in his Vine, did nothing all day but delue, and it bare more fruit then it did before : for who so trauelleth well, he hath euer bread enough for to eate, and he that worketh not, dyeth for hunger.

Here endeth the subtile Fables of Esop.

Here beginne the Fables of *Avian*
right pleasant to reade.

The first Fable is of the old Woman
and the Wolfe.

Every kind of spirit is not to be beleued by us, as appeareth by this fable, of an old woman, which said vnto her child because it wept, Certainly if thou weepest any more, I shall make the Wolfe to eat thee. The Wolfe hearing this old woman

woman say so, abode still at the gate, and supposed to have the child to eat, and when the Wolfe had tarried there so long that he was hungry, he returned againe to the wood, and the shee Wolfe demanded of him, Why hast thou brought me no meat? And he answered, The old woman hath beguiled me which promised me her child to eat, and at the last I had it not. Therefore men ought not to put any great confidence in a womans speeches.

The second fable is of the Tortesse and of the other Birds,

HE that exalteth himselfe more then he ought to do, seldome cometh to good, as appeareth by this fable, of a Tortesse which said to the birds, If ye lift me by very high from the ground into the aire, I shall shew to you great plenty of precious stones. Then the Eagle tooke her, and bare her so high that she might not see the earth, and said to her, Shew me now the precious stones that thou promisedest to shew me: and because the Tortesse might not see the earth, and that the Eagle knew well that he was deceived, he thrust his clowes into the Tortesse belly, and killed him. By which fable we learn, that he which will have worship and glory, may not get it without great labour: therefore it is better and more sure for a man to keep himselfe lowly, then to exalt himselfe on high, and after to dye shamefully: for it is a common saying, Who so mounteth higher then he should, falleth suddenly lower then he would.

The third fable is of the two Crevisses,

THe man which will undertake to teach other, ought first to examine and correct himselfe, as it appeareth by this fable of a crevisse, which would have

chastised her own daughter, because that she went not right, and said to her, My daughter, it pleaseth me not that ye go thus backward, for thereby thou maist come to some harme. And the daughter said to her, My mother, I shall go right and forward with a good will, if ye will go before me to shew me the way: But the mother could go no other wise but after her kind, wherfore the daughter said to her, My mother, learne first your selfe for to go right and forward, and then ye may teach me. Wherefore he that will teach other, ought first to shew good example himselfe, for great shame it is for a Doctor to haue his own faultes accuse him.

The fourth Fable is of the Asse and the
Lions skinne.

NOne ought to glory in the goods of other, as rehearseth this fable of an Asse, which sometime found the skinne of a Lyon, which he did wear on him, but he could neuer hide his eares therewith. And when he was (as he supposed) well arrayed with the said skin, he ran into the Forrest, and when the wild beasts saw him come, they were fearfull and began to flye, for they thought it had been the Lyon. And the master of the Asse sought his Asse vp and down in euery place, and when he had long sought him, he thought he would go to the Forrest, and as he was in the Forrest, he met his Asse arrayed as is before said. But his master which had sought him so long, saw his eares, wherby he knew him well, and anon he tooke him, and said in this manner: Ha ha, master Asse, are ye cloathed with the Lyons skin? Thou makest the beasts afraid, but if they knew thee as well as I do, they would not feare thee, but I assure thee that well I shall beat thee for this. When he tooke from him the skinne of the Lyon and said to him, Lyon thou shalt be no more, but
Asse

Asse shall thou euer be, and his master so beat him with a cudgell, that euer after he remembred it. Therfore he which aduanceth himselfe of other mens goods, is a very foole. For as men say commonly, he is not well arayed, which is clothed with another mans gowne.

The v. Fable is of the Frog and the Fox,

It is great folly for any man to attempt to do that which he cannot do, as by this fable appeareth. A Frogge sometime came out of a ditch, and presumed to leape vpon a high mountaine, and when she was vpon the high mountaine, she said to the other beasts, I am a Distresse in medicine, and can giue remedy to all manner of sicknesse by my art and subtilty, and shall render you good health, whereof some beleeued her. Then the Fox which perceiued the foolish beleefe of the Beasts, began to laugh and said to them; Poore Beasts, how may this foule and venimous beast which is sicke and pale of colour, render and giue to you health? for the Leach that will heale some other, ought first to help himselfe; for many counterfeit the Leach, which cannot a word of the science of medicine, from the which I pray God to keepe you.

The vi. fable is of the Dogge.

He that is vaine glorious of that which should humble him, is a very foole, as by this Fable most plainely appeareth. There was a man which had two dogs, of the which one without barking vled to bite the folke, and the other barked, but did not bite. And when the master of the house perceiued the malice of the Dog which barked not, he hung about his neck a bell, to the end that men should beware of him:

Where

Wherefore this dogge was very proud thereof, and began to dispraise all other dogs: for the which one of the most ancient said vnto him, *O foolish beast, how percest thou well thy folly and great madnes; in thinking that this Bell is giuen thee for thine owne desert and merit; for certainly it is not so, but it is taken to thee for demerit, and because of thy shrewdnesse and great treason, for to shew that thou art false and a traitour. Wherby we learn, that none ought to be ioyfull of that thing, wherof he ought to be sorrowfull, as many foles be: for a great fole were that these, which being led to be hanged, with a cord of gold about his neck, if he should make ioy therof, although the cord were very rich and costly.*

The seventh Fable, is of the Camell and of Iupiter.

Every creature ought to be content with that that God hath giuen him, without taking the inheritance of others, as appeareth by this fable of a Camel which sometime complained to Iupiter, of the other beasts that mocked him, because he was not beautifull as they were, wherfore instantly he prayed to Iupiter in this manner: *Faire sir and mighty god, I pray thee that thou wilt giue me horns, that I may be no more mocked.* Iupiter then begun to laugh, and instead of horns, he took from him his ears, saying, *Thou hast more good then it becometh thee to haue, and because thou demandest that which thou oughtest not to haue, I haue taken from thee that which thou oughtest to haue: For no man ought to desire more than hee ought to haue, lest he thereby leese that which he hath.*

Fable viii. of two fellowes.

Men ought not to hold fellowship with him which is accustomed to beguile others, as appeareth by this

this present fable of two fellows which sometimes held fellowship together, to go both by mountaines and valleys: and for to make better their voyage, they were sworn each to other, that none of them both should leave other untill death should part them. And as they walked in a Forrest, they met with a great wild Beare, and they both ran away, for feare of the which one of them clumed vp into a tree; and when the other saw that his fellow was gone and left him, he laid himselfe downe on the earth, and fained him to be dead. Incontinent the Beare came for to eat him, but because the gallant plaid well his game, the Beare went forth on his way and tought him not: and then his fellow came down from the tree and said vnto him, I pray thee tell me what the Beare said to thee: and his fellow said, He taught me many faire secrets, but among all other things he said to me, That I should neuer trust him which hath once deceiued me.

Table ix. of two Pots.

The poore ought not to take the rich for his fellow, as appeareth by this fable of two Pots, of which one was of Copper, and the other of earth, the which did meet together in the river, and because that the earthen Pot went swifter than did the copper pot, the copper pot said, I pray thee let vs go together, and the earthen pot answered, I wil not go with thee, for if thou shouldest chance to hit me, thou wouldest break me in peeces. Therefore the poore is a foole that compareth himselfe with the rich, for better it is to liue in poverty, than to die villainously and be oppressed of the rich.

Table x. of the Lion and the Bull.

Time serueth not a man alwayes to reuenge himselfe vpon him that hath done him an injury: as appeareth by this present fable, of a Bull which some
time

time fled before a Lyon, and as the Bull would haue entred into a sauernie for to saue him, a Goate came against him to let him that he should not enter, to whom the Bull said: It is not time now to avenge me on thee, for the Lyon chaseth me, but the time shall come that I shall find thee out. Wherefore that man is not wise, which to be presently auenged on his enemy, will bring himselfe into more perill and danger.

The xi. Fable is of the Ape and his Sonne,

There is no greater folly then for a man to praise himselfe, as rehearseth this present Fable, of Iupiter chiefe of the gods, which made all the beasts and birds for to be assembled together for to know their kind. Therewith came forth the Ape, which presented his son to Iupiter, saying thus: Fair sir and mighty god, looke and see here the fairest beast that euer thou createdst in this world. Hereat Iupiter began to laugh, saying vnto him: Thou art a foule beast thus for to praise thy selfe. For none ought to praise himselfe, but ought to do good and vertuous works, for the which other men may giue him praise and commendation.

The xii. Fable is of the Crane and the Peacock,

Though a man be neuer so excellent in any science, yet it is folly in him to praise himselfe, as appeareth by this fable, of a Peacock which sometime made a dinner for a Crane, and when they had eaten and drunken enough, they had much talk together: wherefore the Peacock said to the Crane, Thou hast not so fair a forme, nor so fair feathers as I haue. To whom the Crane answered and said, It is truth: neuertheles, thou hast not so good and faire a vertue, as I haue. For albeit that I haue not so faire feathers as thou hast, yet I can flye better then thou thy selfe canst, for with thy faire feathers thou must eber abide on the earth,
but

but I can flye etien where it pleaseh me. Thus every one ought to be content with that gift which nature hath bestowed on him, without making any vain boast thereof.

Fable xiii. of the Hunter and the Tyger.

Farre worse is the stroake of a tongue, then the wound of a speare, as appeareth by this present Fable: Of a hunter which with his arrowes hart the wild beast in such wise that none escaped him: to the which beasts a Tygre fierce and hardy said in this manner; Be not afraid so, for I shall keep you well. And as the Tygre came to the wood, the Hunter was hid within a bush, and when he saw the Tygre passe before him, he shot at him an arrow and hit him in the thigh, whereof the Tygre was greatly abashed, and weeping and sore sighing, said to the other Beasts, I wot not from whence this cometh unto me. And when the Fox said him so greatly abashed, all laughing he said unto him, Ha, ha Tygre, thou art wonderfull mighty and strong. Then the Tygre said to him, My strength availeth me not at this time, for none may keep himselfe from treason. And therefore some secret is here which I know not before. Notwithstanding, this I may well avouch, that there is no worse arrow, nor that hurteth a man more then the arrow that is shot from an evill tongue. For when some person proffereth or saith some word in the fellowship of some honest man of good life, in the fellowship suspecteth that that which this evill tongue hath said is true, albeit that it be not leasing. But notwithstanding the good man shall ever be wounded of the same arrow, which wound shall be incurable. And if it were the stroake of a speare, it might be with a Surgeon healed, because that incontinent as the word is spoken, he that said it, is no more master of it. And so, this canse the stroak of the tongue is more dangerous and incurable,

Allegorie des deux amis
Fable

Fable xiv. Of the foure Oxen.

Men ought not to break their faith with their good freind, nor to leaue his fellowship, as it appeareth by this fable of foure Oxen which were all in a faire green meadow. And because that they euer kept them together, none other beast durst assaile them, and also the Lion dreaded them much. The which Lion on a day came to them, and by his deceivable words thought for to beguile them, and to take them the better, made them to be separated each from other: and when they were separated, the Lion went and tooke one of them, and when the Lion would haue strangled him. The Ox said vnto him, Cousin, he is a tale that belongeth false and deceivable words, and leaue the fellowship of his good freind; for if wee had beene euer together, thou hadst not taken me; and therefore he which is true and standeth well and sure, ought to looke to himselfe that he fall not through his owne folly.

Fable. xv. Of the Bush and the Aubertree.

Not for his beauty ought to disparage any other; for sometimes such a one as is faire, soon waxeth foule, and from high falleth low, as it appeareth by this fable, of a faire tree which mocked and scorned a little bush, and said: Darest thou not the faire beauty of me? With me men build and build faire houses, palaces, castles, galleries, and diuerse other things for to sail on the sea, thus he advanced and praised himselfe. When came there a labourer with his axe to hew and hake him to the ground. And as the labourer smote vpon the faire tree, the bush said, Certainly my brother, if thou dost as little as I am, thou shouldst not hew me like this to the ground. Wherefore none ought to reioyce himselfe of his moorship; for he that is not in great honour and moorship, he rather may fall into no great shame and dishonour.

Fable,

Fable xvi. of the Fisher and the litle Fish.

MEN ought not to leave the thing that is sure and certain, in hope of the uncertain, as to vs rehearseth this fable, of a fisher which with his line took a litle fish, which said to him, My friend I pray thee that thou wilt not put me to death, for now I am noight to eat, but when I shall be greater, if thou come hither, of me thou shalt have more good, for then I shall serve thee a good while. And the fisher said, Alth that I now haue thee, thou shalt not escape from me, for great folly it were in me to seek thee here another time. For men may not let goe that wherof they be sure, hoping to haue afterward that which is uncertainte.

Fable xvii. of Phœbus, the envious and the
Covetous man.

NONE ought to damage himselfe, to the end he may hurt another the more, as it appeareth by this fable of Iupiter which sent Phœbus into the earth, to haue all the knowledge of the thoughts of men. This Phœbus chanced to meet with two men, of the which one was envious, and the other right covetous. Phœbus demanded of them what their thought was. The first said they to demand of thee great gifts. To the which Phœbus answered, Demand what ye will, for all that ye shall ask me, I shall grant it you; and of that which the first shall aske, the second shall haue double, or as much more again. And then the covetous said, I will that my fellow aske what he will first: wherof the envious was well content, and said unto Phœbus, Faire Sir, I pray thee that I may leese one of mine eyes. Wherefore Phœbus began to laugh, and departed again to Iupiter, and told him the great malice of the envious, which was joyfull and glad of the harme and damage of another, and how he was content to suffer pain, for to damage some other.

Fable

Table xviii. Of the Theefe and the child
that wept.

HE is a foole, that putteth his goods in jeopardy to be lost, in hope to get more: as appeareth by this Fable, of a theefe which found a child weeping besides a Well, of whom the theefe demanded why he wept. And the child answered, I wepe because I have let fall into this Well a bucket of gold. And then the theef took off his clothes, and layd them on the ground, and went down into the Well: and when he was downe, the child took his clothes and went away, leaving him in the Well. Wherefore none ought to leaue that which he hath, in hope for to get that which he hath not: and those things neuer come to good, which are gotten by bad meanes.

Table xix. Of the Lion and the Goate.

That man is wise, which can keepe himselfe from the wily and false, as appeareth by this Fable, of a Lion which met with a Goate which was upon a Mountaine: and when the Lion saw her, he said to her in this manner, for to giue her occasion to come downe from the hill, to the end that he might cate her. My sister, why comest thou not hither into this faire green meadow, for to eat of these fair beards or grasses? And the Goate answered him, Albeit that thou sayest truth, yet neuerthelesse sith thou speakest it, neither for my good nor profit, but only that thou mightest eat and deuoure me. I meane not to trust thy fair speeches: for many times I haue heard say of my dame, He that is well, let him not seeke to amend himselfe: and he which is in a sure place, is a foole if he go from it, and put himselfe in danger and perill, in hope of better fortune.

Table

The xxi Fable, of the Crow which was athirst.

Better is wit then force, as rehearseth this fable of a Crow, which came to drinke out of a bucket. and because that she might not reach to the water, she filled the Bucket with small stones, insomuch that the water came bpwards, whereof she did drinke at pleasure. Whereby we vnderstand that wisdome is more to be commended then any worldly might; and by Sapience men may resist great euill.

The xxii, Fable of the villaine, and of the young Bull.

He that is of an euill nature, shall haue great paine to amend his conditions; as appeareth by this fable of a villaine which had a young Bull, the which he might not bind, because that euer he smote with his bones, wherefore the villaine cut off his horns. But when he would haue bound him, the Bull cast his feet from him, in such wise that he suffered no man to come near him. And when the villaine perceined the malice of the Bull, he said vnto him, I shall chastise thee well enough, for I shall put thee into the Butchers hands; and then the Bull indeed was chastised. Thus men ought to do with wicked and rebellious people, which giue themselves to all kind of euil, namely, to put them into the hangmans hands, and to let him be their butcher to rule them, for otherwise the accustomed conditions will more and more spread, to the corrupting of better disposed persons among whom they liue.

The xxiii, Fable is of the Palmer and of the Satyre.

Men ought to beware of them which beat both fire and water, as rehearseth this fable, of a Pilgrime which walked in the Winter through a great
 a Forrest,

Forrest, and because that the Snow had couered all the waies, he wist not whether he went. Against whom came a woodwoose named Satyre, because he saw him cold; which approached to the Pilgrim, and brought him to his pit: and when the Pilgrim saw him, he had great dread, because that a woodwoose is a monster like a man. And as this Satyre led this pilgrim into a pit, the Pilgrim did blow his hands for to heat them, for he was sore a cold, and the woodwoose gaue him hot water to drink, and when the Pilgrim would haue drunke it, he beganne to blow it. And the woodwoose demanded of him, why he did blow it. And the Pilgrime said, I blow it to make it somewhat more cold. The woodwoose then said to him, Thy fellowship is not good for me, because that thou bearest both fire and water in thy mouth: Therefore go hence from my pit, and neuer returne again: for the fellowship of the man which hath two tongues is naught. Wherefore the man that is wise, ought to shie the fellowship of flatterers, for by flattering and adulation, many haue been deteined.

The xxiii. Fable is of the Oxe and the Rat.

Lords ought to loue their subiects, for he which is hated of his tenants and subiects, is not Lord of his hands. As it appereth by this present fable, of an Oxe which sometime was within a stable, and as the Oxe on a time would saire haue slept, a Ratte came and bit him by the thighes, and as the Oxe would haue smitten him, he ran away into his hole. And then the Oxe beganne to menace the Rat, and the Rat said to him, I am not afraid of thee, albeit I am little, I may impeach thee. And if thou art great, thanke thy parents because thereof and not thy selfe; and therefore the strong ought not to dispraise the little, but to loue him, as the chiefe or head ought to loue his kinnes, for he

The Fables of Avian.

he that loveth not, ought not to be loved: and therefore the Lord must love his subjects, if of them he would be loved.

Fable xxiiii. of the Goose and her Lord,

HE that seeketh to gaine more then he ought, oftentimes getteth nothing, as saith this Fable, of a man which had a Goose that laide every day an egge of gold. The man of esbetoufnele commanded her that every day she should lay two eggs. And she said to him, certainly my master I may not. Wherefore the man was wroth with her, and slew her: by means whereof he lost his former profit, and afterwards waited very sorrowfull: Whiche it was no time to that the stable doore when the horses are gone: and he is not wise which over rashly doth any thing whereof he shall repent him afterwards, nor he that hurterh himselfe to be avenged on some other. For because he supposed to win all, he lost all.

The xxv. Fable is of the old Ape and her two children.

HE that sometimes the parents both dispraise, oftentimes proueth the best child, as appeareth by this Fable, of an Ape which had two children, of the which she hated the one and loved the other, and that she loved she tooke in her armes and kied before the dogs. And when the other saw that his mother left him behind, he ran and leapt on her back, and by reason that the little Ape which she held in her armes hindred her flight she let it fall to the ground, and the other which the mother hated, held fast on her back and was saved, the which from henceforth killed and embraced his mother, and she then beganne greatly to love him. Wherefore many times it happeneth, that thing which

is dispraised and hated, is better then the thing which is loued and praised. And many times the children which be praised & loued, do lesse good then they which be dispraised and hated.

Fable xxvi. of the Wind and the earthen Pot.

THe man that ouermuch exalteth himselfe, shall be abased, as appeareth by this Fable, of a Potter which made a great pot of earth, which he set in the Sunne, that it might the better dry, and against this Potte there came a great Wind. And when the Wind saw the Potte, he demanded, Who art thou? And the Potte answered, I am a pot the best made that can be found, and none may impeach me. How said the Wind? Thou art yet all soft, and hast neither vertue ne force, and because I know thy great pride, I shall breake thee in peces, to the end that thou maiest haue knowledge of thy great pride. And therefore the feeble ought to be meeke, and humble himselfe, and shew obeisance to his Lord; and not to exalt himselfe more then he ought, to the end that he be not abased.

Fable xxvii. of the Wolfe and the Lambe,

OF two euills men ought euer to eschew the worst, if any of them may be eschewed, as it appeareth by this fable, of a Wolfe which ranne after a Lamb the which Lambe fled into the house whereas the Goates were; And when the wolfe saw that he might in no wise take the Lambe, he said to him by sweete words, Leane thy fellowship, and come with me into the fields: for if thou come not, thou shalt bee taken with them, and being taken, shalt be sacrificed to their gods. And the Lambe answered to the Wolfe, I had rather to shed all my bloud for the loue of the gods, and
to

to be sacrificed to them, then to be beaten and denouted of thee. And therefore he is full of wisdome and prudence, who of two great euills, may escape the greatest of both.

Here endeth the Fables of Avian,

Here followeth the pleasant Fables of *Alfonce.*

The first Fable is of the exhortation of
Sapience and Love.

ARabe of Lucane said to his son in this manner:
My sonne, beware that the Ant be no more
prudent then thy selfe, which gathereth and
assembleth together in the Summer, all he
needeth to haue in the winter; and beware that thou
 sleepe no longer then the Cocke doth, which watch-
eth and waketh early in the morning, and that bee
be no wiser then thy selfe, which ruleth and gover-
neth nine Venues. But it sufficeth that thou rule
and governe one well: and also that the Dogge be
not more noble then thy selfe, which forgetteth not
that good which is done to him, but euer he remem-
breth it. Besides my Sonne, suppose it not a small
matter to haue a good friend, but doubt not to haue
a thousand friends. And when Arabe would dye,
he demanded this question of his Sonne, saying:
My sonne, how many good freinds hast thou? And
the Sonne answered his Father, and said, My Fa-
ther, I haue as I suppose many to bee my freinds.
Then said his father, Account none to be thy freinds
vnlesse thou hast well estated and proued them before.

For I assure thee, I haue liued longer in this world than thou hast, and yet I haue gotten scarcely halfe a friend, wherfore I marvel much how thou hast gotten so many friends. And then the sonne seeing the admiration or wonder of his Father, demanded of him, My Father, I pray you giue me your counsell, how I shall now assay my friend. And his father said to him, go thou and kill a Calfe, and put it in a sack all bloudy and beare it to thy first friend, and say to him, It is a man which thou hast slain, and desire him for the loue which he beareth to thee, that he will keep thy misdoeds secretly, and bury it, to the end that thou maist be saued: this counsell his son folloved: to whom his friend said, Return again, for within my house thou shalt not enter, if thou hast done euill, I will not beare the penalty of it. And thus one after another he assayed all his friends, and euery one of them answered him as the first; whereof he was greatly abashed, and returned again to his father, and told him how he had sped: and his father said, many be friends in words, but few in deeds, but I shall tell thee what thou shalt do, Goe thou to my halfe friend, and beare to him thy Calfe, and thou shalt heare what he will say to thee. When the son came to the halfe friend of his Father, he said to him as he did to the other. And when the halfe friend vnderstood the matter, he took him secretly into his house, and led him into an obscure place for to bury his dead calfe, wherby the son knew the truth of the halfe friends loue. Then the son of the Arabe turned again to his father, and told him all that his halfe friend had done to him. Then the Father said to his son, that the Philosopher said, that the true friend is found in extreme need: When demanded the son of his Father, Sawest thou neuer a man which in his life time did get a whole friend? And his Father answered and said, I neuer saw any, but I haue heard of such a one: and the son answered, My father, I pray

pray thee that thou wilt rehearse it to me, to the end that by aduenture I may get such a one. Then the Father said vnto his son after this manner: My son, sometime I haue heard of two Merchants which neuer had seen each other, the one was of Egypt, and the other of Baldock, but they had certain knowledge each of other by their letters, which they wrote friendly one to the other. It so befell that the Merchant of Baldock came into Egypt to cheapeen and buy some ware, wherof his friend was glad, and went to meet him, and brought him benignly to his house. And after he had cheered and refreshed him by the space of foureteen dayes, the same Merchant of Baldock became very sick, wherof his friend was right sorrowfull, and incontinent sent for the best Physicians and Leaches that were in all Egypt, for to recover his health, and when as the Physicians had seen and visited him, and well regarded his wound, they said that he had no boddy sicknesse, but that he was rauished with loue; and when his friend heard these words, he came vnto him, and said, My friend, I pray thee that thou shew me thy sicknesse; then his friend said to him, I pray thee that thou wilt bring hither all the women and maidens that be in thy house, for to see if she which my hart desireth be among them: and anon his friend brought before him, both his own daughters and all his seruants, among the which was a faire young Maiden which he had nourished for his pleasure. And when the sick man saw her, he said to his friend, this same is she which may be the only cause of my life or death: the which his friend hearing, gaue her vnto him to be his wife, with all such goods as he had of hers, wherby he wedded, and returned vnto baldock with great joy. But within a while after, it fortun'd so that this Merchant of Egypt fell into great pouerty, and for to haue some consolation or comfort, he took his journey toward Baldock, and supposed to goe and see his friend, and

ruen about one of the clock he arrived in the cittie, and forasmuch as he was not well arrated, he was ashamed by day light to go into the house of his friend, but went and lodged him within the Temple nigh unto his freinds house. It hapned then that on the same night that he lay there, there was a man slaine before the gate of the same Temple, wherefore the neighbours were soze troubled, and the people moued therewith went into the Temple, where they found no body saue only the Egyptian, the which they tooke, and demanded of him whether he had slain the man which lay dead before the portall of the Temple. He then seeing his misfortune and pouerty, confessed he had killed the man, for because of his euill fortune he would rather die then liue, wherefore he was led before a Judge, and was condemned to be hanged, And as men ledde him towards the gallowes, his freind saw him and knew him, and began for to weep, remembring the benefitts that he had done unto him, wherefore he went vnto the Justice, and said, My Lord, this man did not the murther, for it was my selfe that did it, and therefore you should do great sinne, if you doe put this guiltlesse man to death, And anon he was taken to be had to the gallowes. And then the Egyptian said, My Lord, he did it not, and therefore euill should you doe to put him to death. And as the two freinds would haue been hanged each for other, hee which had done the murther indeed, came and confessed there openly the fact, and adressed himself before the Justice, and said, My Lord, none of them both haue done the deed, and therefore punish not these indeed, for I alone ought to beare the paine. Whereat the Judge greatly maruelled, & for the doubt which therein was great, the Justice took them all three, and led them before the King. And when they had rehearsed to the King all the manner, after inquest thereupon made, and that he knew the truth of it, he granted

his

his grace to the murtherer, and so all the three were deliuered. Then the friend brought his friend to his house, and receiued him joyfully, and after gaue vnto him both siluer and gold, and the Egyptian returned againe to his house. And when the Father had rehearsed all this, his sonne said to him, My Father, I know well that he that may get a good friend is happy, and with great labour I suppose I shall finde such a one.

The second Fable is of the mony delivered to keep.

A Spaniard arriued sometime in the land of Egypt, and because that he feared to be robbed passing through the desert of Arabia, he thought in himselfe, that it were wisely done to deliuer his money to some true man, to keep vntill his returne againe. And because that he had heard some say, that within the Citty was a true man, he went anon vnto him, and tooke to him his siluer soz to keepe it. And when he had done his voyage, he came againe to him, and demanded of him his siluer: and he answered him in this manner: My freind I know not who thou art, soz I neuer saw thee before that I wot of, and if thou sayest oz speakest any more words, I shall make thee to be well beaten. Then was the Spaniard sorrowfull and wroth, and thereof he made a complaint to his neighbours, and the neighbours said vnto him, certainly we be greatly abashed of that ye tell vs, for he is among vs all reputed and holden soz a good man and a true, and therefore returne againe vnto him, and with faire words demand of him that hee may render vnto thee thy coyne againe; the which thing he did. And the old man answered him more sharply and more rigorously then he had done before, wherewith the Spaniard was wonderfull wroth, and as he departed out of the old mans house, hee mete with an old woman, the which demanded of him the cause why hee was

was so troubled and heaby. And after he had told her the cause why, the old woman said vnto him: Make good cheere, for if it be as thou saiest, I shall giue thee counsell how thou shalt recover thy siluer. And he demanded of her how it might be done: & she said to him, bring hither to me a man of thy country whom thou trustest, and cause faire chests to be made, and fill them all with stones, and by thy fellowes thou shalt cause them to be borne into his house, and to him they shall say, that a Merchant of Spaine sent them vnto him for to keep surely: and when the chests shall be within his house, thou shalt goe againe and demand of him thy siluer. Which thing he did, and as the said chests were borne into his house, the Spaniard went with them that bare them, and said vnto the old man in this manner, My freind, these foure chests be all full of gold, silver and precious stones, which we bring to you, as to the trustiest and faithfulest man that we know, for to keep them surely, because that wee doe feare theues that be in the desert. After the which words said, came he which the old woman had counselled, and demanded of the old man his siluer. And because that the old man feared that the Spaniard would haue defrauded him, he said, Thou art welcome, I maruell why thou tarriedst so long ere thou camest, and incontinent he restored to him his siluer: and thus by the counsell of the old woman which he greatly thanked, he had his goods againe, and returned into his owne country.

The third Fable speaketh of the subtile invention of a sentence given vpon a darke and obscure cause.

Op a time it befell, that a good man a Labourer died, leauing nothing to his son, but only a house, the which Sonne liued by the labour of his hands very poorely. This young man had a rich neighbour, which demanded

demanded of him if he would sell his house. But he said no, because it was come to him by inheritance. Wherefore the said rich man his neighbour, consorted ought with him to deceiue him : but the young man fled his company as much as he might. And the rich man perceiuing that the young man fled his company, he bethought him of a great deceit, and requested of the poore young man, that he would let him part of his house, for to delue and make a celler, which he would hold of him for yearly rent, and the poore man let it him. And when the celler was made, the rich man brought into it ten tunnes of Dyle, of the which five were full of Dyle, and the other five were but halfe full, and he made a great pit in the earth, and put the five tunnes which were halfe full in it, and the other five aboue on them, and shut the dore of the celler, and deliuered the key to the poore young man, and prayed him fraudulently to keepe well his Dyle ; but the poore young man knew not the malice and falshood of his neighbour, wherefore he was content to keep the key. And within a while after, as the Dyle became deere, the rich man came to the poore man and asked of him his goods, and the young man gaue him the key. This rich man sold to the merchants his Dyle, and warranted each Tunne full. And when the Merchants measured the Dyle, they found but five of the tenne tunnes full, whereof the rich man demanded of the poore young man restitution. And for to haue his house, he made him come before the Iudge. And so when the poore man was came before the Iudge, he demanded time and space for to answer, for he thought that he had kept well and truly the Dyle : and the Iudge granted him a day. And then went he to a Philosopher which was Procurator for the poore people, and prayed him for charity that he would giue to him good counsell at his need. And he rehearsed and told vnto him all his case, and swore vpon the holy Euangelist

gelist that he tooke none of the rich mans Dyle. And then the Philosopher answered to him in this manner. My sonne, haue no feare, for the truth may not faile: and the next morrow after, the Philosopher went with the poore man before the iudgement seat, and the same Philosopher was constituted by the King for to giue the iust sentence of it. And after that the cause had been well defended, and pleaded of both parties, the Philosopher said, this same rich man is of good reputation, and I suppose not that he demanded more then he should haue. Also I beleue not that this poore man is guilty of the blame which he putted on him: but notwithstanding, for to know the truth of it, I ordaine and giue this sentence, that the Dyle pure and cleane of the five Tunnes which are full be measured, and also the Lees thereof, and after that the pure and cleane Dyle of the five Tunnes which be but halfe full be also measured, with the Lees thereof, and then loke if the Lees of the five Tunnes but halfe full, be equall to the Lees of the other five Tunnes, which were wholly full: and if it be so by measuring truly, that lesse be found within these vessels which be but halfe full, then in the other, it shall be thereby sufficiently proued, that no Dyle hath been taken out of them: but if there be found as much Lees in the one as in the other, the poore man shall be condemned. And of this sentence the poore young man was well content, and by measuring as aforesaid the troth was knowne: Wherefore the poore man was quit, and the rich man was condemned, and his great malice and falshood known: for there is no sin or misdeede done, but that once it shall be manifested.

Fable .iij. of the sentence given upon the money which was found;

A Rich man some time went by a City, and as he walked from one side to another, a great purse fell

fell from him, wherein were a thousand crownes, the which a poore man found, and took them to his wife to keep, whereof she was full glad, and said, thanked be God for all his goodnesse which he sendeth to vs; if he send now the great summe, keep it well. And vpon the morrow after, the rich man made to be cried through the city, that whosoever had found a thousand crownes in a purse, he should restore them to him again, and that he should haue for his reward a hundred of them. And when the poore man heard this cry, he ran incontinent to his wife, and said to her, My wife, that which we haue found must be restored again, for it is farre better to haue a hundred crownes without sinne, then a thousand wrongfully; and though that the woman would haue resisted, yet in the end she was content. And thus the poore man restored the thousand crownes to the rich man, and demanded of him his hundred crownes; but the rich man full of falshood, said to the poore man, thou rendrest not to me all my gold which thou didst find; for of it I lack foure hundred peeces of gold; and when thou shalt bring me againe the said foure hundred peeces of gold, thou shalt haue of me the hundred crownes which I promised thee. The poore man answered, I haue brought thee all that I haue found: wherefore they fell into great strife, insomuch that the cause was brought before the king to be decided. Wherefore the king called before him a great Philosopher, which was Procurator for the people. And when the cause was well disputed, the Philosopher moued with pittie, called the poore man, and said vnto him, Come hither my freind; by thy faith hast thou restored all the money which thou foundest in the purse? And the poore man answered, yea sir by my faith. Then the Philosopher said before the assistance. Sith this rich man is true and faithfull, and that it is not to be thought that he would demand more then he ought to haue:
and

and on the other part, men must beleve that this poore man is known for an honest and true man: therefore this is my sentence, that thou sir King take the thousand crotones, and that thou give a hundred of them to this poore man which found them, and after, when he that hath lost them shall come, thou shalt restore them to him: and if it happen that another finde the thousand foure hundred crotones, they shall be redoyed againe vnto this good man which is here present, which saith that he hath lost them. The which sentence was agreeable and pleasing to all the company. And when the rich man saw that he was deceived by his own folly, he desired mercy and grace of the King, saying: Sir, this poore man that hath found my purse, hath truly restored to me all that I ought to have, but certainly I would haue deceived him, wherefore I pray thee that thou wilt take pittie on me. And then the King had mercy on him, and the poore man was well contented and paid, and all the malice of the rich man was knowne.

The fift Fable is of the faith of three fellowes.

Oft it hapneth, that the euill which is procured to other, commeth vnto him which procureth it, as it appeareth by three fellowes, of the which twaine were Bargesles, and the third a Labourer, the which being assembled together for to go to the holy Sepulcher, these three fellowes made great provision of flour for their pilgrimage, in such wise that it was all consumed, except only for to make one loafe. And when the Bargesles saw the end of their flour, they said, if we find not some meanes for to beguile this villaine, because that he is a right great eater, we shall surely die for hunger, wherefore we must devise a way that we may haue the Loafe, which shall be made of all our flour. And therefore they concluded together and said, when the Lease shall be put into the Oven, we shall go
and

and lay vs down to sleep, and he that shall dreame best, the losse shall be his. And because that we both be subtil and wise, he shall not dreame so well as we shall. Wherefore the losse shall be ours, whereof all three were well content, and all began to sleepe. But when the Labourer perceined all their deceit, and saw that his fellows were a sleepe, he went and drew the losse out of the Quen and eat it, and after he fained himselfe to be a sleepe, and then one of the burgesse rose up, and said to his fellows, I haue dreamed a wonderfull dreame, for two Angels haue taken and begone me with great ioy before the diuine Mother. And the other burgesse awoke, and said, thy dreame is wonderfull, but I suppose that mine is farre fairer then thine is : for I dreamed that two Angels drew me on hard ground, for to lead me into hell. And after they did awake the villaine, which as dreadfull said : who is here ? And they answered, Wee be thy fellows. And he said to them, how be ye so soon returned ? And they said, we departed not yet from hence. And hee said to them, by my faith I dreamed that the Angels had led one of you into Heauen, and the other into hell. Wherefore I supposed that you should neuer haue come againe, and therefore I arose up from sleep, and because I was hungry, I drew the losse out of the Quen and eate it. Thus oft it hapneth, that he which supposeth to beguile another, is beguiled himselfe.

The vi. Fable is of the Labourer and the Nightingale.

There was sometime a Labourer which had a garden that was very pleasant, into the which he oft went for his disport and pleasure, and one day at euen, when he was weary, and had travelled sore, for to take his recreation, he entred into this garden, and set himselfe downe vnder a tree, where he heard the song of the

the Nightingale. And for the great pleasure and ioy which he tooke thereof he sought, and at the last found the means to take the Nightingale, to the end that he might haue great ioy and pleasure of her afterward. And when she was taken, she demanded of the Labourer, Wherefore hast thou taken so great pain to take mee: for well thou wottest thou maiest haue no great profit by me. And the Labourer answered thus to the Nightingale, for to hear thee sing I haue taken thee; and the Nightingale answered, Certainly, in vaine thou hast laboured, for no good will I sing while I am in prison; then the Labourer answered, if thou singest not well, I shall eat thee. And then the Nightingale said, If thou put me within a pot for to be sodden, little meat shalt thou haue of my body: and if thou lettest me to be roasted, there shall be lesse; and therefore boyled nor roasted, thou shalt not fill thy belly of me; but if thou let me sile I shall do thee great good: for three things I will teach thee, which thou shalt loue better then three fat kine. Then the Labourer let the Nightingale sile. And when she was out of his hands and that she was vpon the tree, she said to the Labourer, My freind, I haue promised thee that I shall teach thee three things, whereof the first is this, that thou beleue nothing which is impossible: the second is, that thou keep well that that is thine: and the third is, that thou take no sorrow for the thing lost, which may not be recovered. And soon after the Nightingale began to sing, and in her song said thus: Blessed be God which hath deliuered me out of the hands of this villaine or churle, which hath not known, seen, nor touched the precious Diamond which I haue within my belly: for if he had found it, he had been right rich, and from his hands I had not escaped. And then the Labourer which heard her song, beganne to complaine and to make great sorrow, and after said, I am unhappy that I haue lost so faire a treasure, And the Nightingale

ingale said to the Labourer, Now know I well that thou art a foole, for thou takest sorrow for that whereof thou shouldest haue none : and soon thou hast forgotten my doctrine, because thou weenest that within my belly should be a precious stone, more of weight then I am, and I told and taught to thee, thou shouldest neuer beleue that thing which is impossible, and if that stone were thine, why hast thou lost it? and if thou hast lost it and maiest not recouer it, why takest thou sorrow for it? And therefore it is folly to chastise or to teach a foole, that will neuer beleue the learning and doctrine which is giuen to him.

Fable vii. of the Rethorician and the
crooke backed.

A Philosopher said once vnto his sonne, that when he were fallen by fortune into some dammage or perrill, as soon as he might he should deliuer him out of it, to the end that afterward he should be no more vexed therewith, as it appeareth by this fable, of a certaine Rethorician, which once demanded of a King, that of all them which should enter into the City, hauing some kind of fault in their bodies, as crooked or counterfeited, he might haue of them at the entry of the gate a penny. The which request the King granted, and made his letters to be sealed and written vnder his signet, and he kept them still at the gate, and of euery one that was lame, scabbed, or had any deformity on their bodies, he took a penny. It happned on a day, that among the rest a crook-backed and deformed man would haue entred within y^e city, without giuing any penny, and did put vpon his back a fair mantle, and afterward came to the gate. And when the Porter beheld him, he perceiued that he was goggle eyed, and said vnto him: Pay me my duty. And the goggle eyed would pay him nothing, wherefore he took from him his mantle, and when he saw that he was crook-backed,

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he said vnto him, thou wouldest not before pay me a penny, but now thou shalt pay me twain. And as they strived together, his Hat fell off his head and the Porter which saw his scabbe head, said vnto him, now shalt thou pay three pence vnto me. And then the Porter yet againe set his hands vpon him, and felt that his body was all scabbed. And as they were thus wrestling together, the crooke-backed fell to the ground, and hurt himselfe sore vpon the leg. And then the Porter said vnto him, thou shalt pay me five pence, for thy body is all counterfeited, therefore thou shalt leane here thy mantle, and if thou hadst paid a penny at the first, thou haddest gone on thy way free and quit, without any further molestation. Therefore he is wise that patienth hat he oweth, to the end that thereof come not to him greater damage.

The seventh Fable maketh mention of a Disciple and a Sheepe.

There was sometime a Disciple which took his pleasure to rehearse and tell many Fables. The Disciple prayed his master to tell him a long Fable: the Master answered, beware it happen not vnto vs as it appeareth by this present fable, of a King, and of his Fabulator. And the Disciple said to his Master, I pray thee tell me how it befell. And the Master said vnto his Disciple; There was sometime a King that had a Fabulator, which rehearsed vnto him oftentimes when he would sleepe, fine Fables to reioyce or make the King merrv, and so make him fall asleepe. But it befell vpon a day, that the King being heauy and sad, could in no wise fall asleepe. And after the said Fabulator had rehearsed his fine Fables, the King desired to heare more. And then the said Fabulator rehearsed vnto him three short Fables. And then the King said vnto him, that he would heare one more longer, and then shall I sleepe. And the Fabulator then rehearsed vnto him

him such a fable as here shall be shewed, of a rich man which went to a market or faire to buy Sheep, the which man bought a thousand Sheep. And as he was returning from the faire, he came to a River, and because of the great water he could not passe over the bridge: notwithstanding he went so long to and fro on the rimage of the said river, that at the last he found a narrow way, upon the which might passe scant three Sheep at once, and thus he passed, and had them one after another: And hitherto he rehearsed of this fable, the Fabulator fell asleep: and anon after the King awoke the Fabulator, and said unto him in this manner: I pray thee that thou wilt make an end of thy fable which thou hast begunne to tell me: and the Fabulator answered him in this manner, Sir, the river is great, and the sheep are little, wherefore let the Merchant drive over his Sheep, and after I shall make an end of my fable. And then was the King pacified: And therefore be thou content with that I haue rehearsed unto thee, for there be folke so curious in speech, that they cannot be content with few words.

Fable nine, of the Wolfe, the Foxe, and the Cheefe.

There was sometime a Labourer which could not rule his Oren, because they smote with their feet, wherefore the Labourer said to them, I pray to God, that the wolfe may deuoure you all. The which words the Wolfe heard, wherefore he hid himselfe neere, and then came for to eate them. And when night was come, the Labourer unbound his oren, and let them go into his house. And when the Wolfe saw the Labourer coming toward him, he said, O thou Labourer, many times in the day thou dost gine to me thy Oren, and therefore keepe thy promise. And the Labourer said therefore

to the Wolfe, I promised thee naught at all. And the Wolfe said, I shall not let thee go without thou keep thy promise. And as they had so great strife and contention together, they remitted the cause to be pleaded before a Judge, and as they went seeking a Judge, they met with the Fox, unto whom they declared their strife. Then said the Fox unto them, I shall give on your cause a good sentence; but I must speake with each of you a part, and they were content: and the Fox said to the Labourer, thou shalt give to me a good fat Henne, and another to my wife, and I shall make it so, that thou with all thine Dren shalt go freely to thine house. Wherefore the Labourer was well content, and after the Fox said to the Wolfe, I have well laboured for thee, so the Labourer shall give unto thee a great Cheese, and let him go home with his Dren, and the Wolfe was well content. And after the Fox said unto the Wolfe, Come thou with me, and I shall lead thee where the Cheese is: and then he led him too and fro, here and there, untill such time that the moone did shine full brightly, and when they came to a Well, the Fox leapt upon it, and shewed unto the Wolfe the shadow of the Doon, which reluced in the Well, and said to him, Look now Gossip how that Cheese is faire, great and broad: hast thee therefore and go downe and take the faire Cheese. Then the Wolfe said to the Fox, Thou must be the first of both that shall go down, and if thou maiest not bring it up with thee because of the greatnesse, I then shall come to help thee; and the Fox was content because there was a couple of buckets, of the which one went downe, and the other came up: and the Fox entred into one of the buckets and descended into the Well, and being downe, he called unto the Wolfe, saying: Gossip come hither and help, for the Cheese is so big that I cannot bear it. Then the Wolfe being afraid that the fox would eat the Cheese, entred hastily into the other bucket,

bucket, and as fast as the Wolfe went downe, the fox came up ; and when the Wolfe perceined the fox comming, he said vnto him : My gossip ye go hence : Thou saiest true, said the fox, for thus it is with the world, as one commeth downe, the other goeth vp. Thus the fox through his subtilty departed, and left the Wolfe in the Well : so lost the Wolfe both the Oren and the Cheese. It is not good therefore to leaue that which is certaine, for that which is vncertain, for many be in like sort deceived by the falshood and decess of Advocates and Judges.

The tenth fable is of the husband, the mother,
and the wife.

There was a Merchant that married a young woman which had her mother yet aliue. It hapned that this Merchant went once into a far Countrey for to buy some ware : and as he was going, he tooke his wife vnto his mother, to keepe and rule her honestly till he came againe. His wife then by the consent of her mother, enamoured her selfe on a faire young man, which gaue her mony to buy good chere. And as they thre made merry the husband came again from the faire, and knockt at the doore, whereat they were abashed. Then said the Mother vnto them, feare not, but do as I shall tell you, and care not : then said she to the young man, take this sword and go to the gate, and beware you say no word to him, but let me alone : and as the husband would haue entred into the house, seeing the young man holding a naked sword, he was greatly afraid : and then the mother said to him ; My sonne, thou art welcome, be not afraid of this man, for thre ran after him for to haue slain him, and by chance he found the doore open, and this is the cause why he came hither to save his life. Then the husband said to them, We haue done well, and I con ye great thanke.

Thus went the young man his way safely by the subtilty of the mother and the daughter : to the which trust not thy selfe, if thou be wise.

Fable xi. of an harlot or bawde.

There was sometime a Gentleman which had a chaste wife, and wonderfull faire ; this Gentleman would have gone on pilgrimage to Rome, and left his wife at home, because that he knew her for a good and chaste woman : It hapned on a day as she went into the towne, that a faire young man was enamoured on her, and tooke on him hardinesse, and required her of loue, and promised her a very many faire gifts. But she was good, and had rather dye then consent thereto : wherefore the young man almost died for sorrow, to the which fellow came an old woman that demanded of him the cause of his sicknesse. And the young man discovered unto her all the matter, asking helpe and counsell of her. And the old woman being witty and malicious, said unto him ; Be of good courage, and feare not, for I shall so bring about this feat, that thou shalt have thy will fulfilled. And after this the old bawde went home to her owne house, and made a Cat which she had at home to fast three dayes one after another, and after that she took some bread, with a great quantity of mustard upon it, and gaue the same unto her Cat for to eat. And when the Cat smelled it, she began for to weep and cry. And the old woman went unto the house of the young woman, and bare her little Cat with her, the which good and young woman receiued and welcomed her very honestly, because that all the towne held her for a goodly woman : and as they were talking together, the young woman had pittie of the cat which wept, and demanded of the old woman what the Cat ayed. And the old woman said to her, O my faire daughter, reuie not my sorow : and saying these words, she beganne to weep, and said, My friend,

For no good will I tell thee the cause why my cat weepeth: and the young woman said, My good mother, I pray you that you will tell me the cause wherefore your Cat weepeth. And the old woman said to her, My friend, I will, if thou wilt sweare that thou shalt never rehearse it to any body. To the which promise the good and true young Woman accorded her selfe supposing that it had been all good, and said, I will. And then the old Woman said to her in this manner, My friend, the same Cat which thou seest vnder, was my daughter, which was wonderfull faire, gracions, and chaste, which a young man loved much, and because she refused him, he died for loue; wherefore the gods hauing pittie on him, haue turned my daughter to his Cat. And the young woman supposing that her old mother had said truth, said to her in this manner, Alas my faire mother, I wot not what I shall do, for such case may well happen to me. For in this towne is a young man which almost died for the loue of me, But for the loue of my Husband, to whom I ought to keep my selfe chaste, I haue not granted to him; neuer thelesse, I shall do what that thou shalt counsell me. And the old woman said to her, My friend haue pittie on him so soone as thou maiest, lest it befall to thee as it did to my daughter. The young woman then answered to her, and said, If he require me any more, I shall accord with him, and if he require me no more, yet will I preferre my selfe to him, and to the end I offend not the gods, I shall accomplish it as soone as I may; The old woman then tooke her leaue of her, and went to the young man, and rehearsed to him all these things, whereof his heart was ioyfull, and anon he went to the young woman, and with her fulfilled his desire. Thus we may see, what evils may be done by bandes; Wherefore I would to God they were all burnt.

The xii. Fable is of a blind man and his Wife,

There was sometime a blind man which had a faire wife, of whom he was iealous, therefore he kept her so that she might go no where; for euer he held her by the hand. In the end she was enamoured of a young youth, but they could not find the meanes to fulfill their will: notwithstanding the woman which was subtile and ingenious, counselled her friend that he should come to her house, and that he should enter into the garden and climbe vp into a tree: he did as she bade him, and hauing made their entrance, the Woman came againe into her house and said vnto her husband, My friend, I beseech you that you will go into the garden for to disport vs a while there. And the blind man was content, and said to his wife, Well my friend, I am content, let vs goe thither: and as they were vnder the Pear tree, she said to her Husband, My friend, I pray thee let me go vp into the tree, and I will gather for vs both some faire Peares. Well my friend said the blind man, do so: and when she was vpon the tree, she beganne to shake the Pear tree at one side, and the young man at the other side: and when the blind man heard the Pear tree shake thus hard, and the noise they made, he said, Ah ill Woman, albeit I see thee not, Neuerthelesse I feele and vnderstand thee, but I heartily beseech the gods to send me my sight againe: and as soone as he had made his prayer, Iupiter restored to him his sight. When he saw that pageant vpon the tree, he said to her, Ah unhappy Woman, I shall neuer haue ioy with thee. And for that the young woman was ready in speech, and very subtile withall, she replied presently in this manner, My friend, thou art beholding to me for thy sight, for I neuer ceased day nor night to pray vnto the gods, that they would render vnto thee thy sight, Therefore the goddess Venus visibly shewed herselfe to me, and said, That if I would do some pleasure

pleasure to this said young man she would restore to thee thy sight, and thus am I the cause of it. Then the good man said to her, My right deare wife and good friend, I cry thee mercy, and thanke thee greatly, for thou hast done right to me, and I great wrong to thee.

Fable xiii. of the Taylor, the Steward,
and his servants.

MAN ought not to do vnto others, that which he would not haue done vnto himselfe, as it appeareth by this present fable, of a Steward which had a Taylor, which was a good workeman, as any was in those dayes, which Taylor had many seruants, whereof one was called Medius, that surmounted all the other in shaping or sowing; wherefore the Steward commanded his seruants, that the said Taylor should alwaies fare well when they were at his house, and eate and drinke of the best. It happened on a day that the Steward gaue vnto them very delicious meate, in which was some hony, and because that Medius was not there, the Steward said vnto the rest, that they should keepe some of that meat for him. When the Master Taylor answered, He must haue none, for if he were here, he would not eat of it, for he did neuer loue hony. And as they had done, Medius came, and demanded of his fellowes, Why kept ye no part of this meat for me? Then the Steward answered, Because that thy Master said, Thou neuer didst eat any hony, and therefore no part of the meate was kept for thee. And Medius answered him neuer a word, but beganne to thinke how he might quite his Master. Upon a day as Medius was alone, the Steward demanded of him, if he knew no man that could worke so well as his Master? And Medius said nay, and that it was great pittie of a sicknesse that he had. Then the Steward demanded what sicknesse it was? and

and Medius answered, My Lord, when he is entred into his frenzie or woodnesse, there commeth vpon him a rage. And how shall I know it, said the Steward? Certainly, my Lord, said Medius, When ye shall see that he shall sit at his work, and that he shall look here and there, and shall smite vpon the board with his fist, then may ye know that his sickness commeth vpon him; And then, without ye take him and binde him, and also beate him well, he shall do great harme and damage. And the Steward said to him, care not therefore, my freind, for well I shall beware of him. And the next morning the Steward came to see the Taylors. And then Medius, which knew well the cause of his coming, tooke away secretly his masters sheres, and hid them, and anon his Master beganne to looke for them, and searched all about here and there, and smote with his fist vpon the board. And then the master Steward began to look on his manners, and suddenly made him to be taken and holden by his seruants, and after made him to be bound wel and beaten. Then was the Master Taylor all abashed and demanded of him, My Lord, Wherefore do you beat me so cruelly? What offence haue I done, that I must be bound and thus beaten? And then the Steward said to him in this manner, because Medius told me that thou art frantick, and if thou be not well bound and beaten, thou wouldest do great harme, And the master came to his seruant Medius, and rigorously said vnto him, Was thou bad boy, full of euill words, when sawest thou me mad? And his seruant proudly answered him, My Master, When diddest thou see that I eat no honer? Therefore I threw to thee one bone for another. And the master Steward and all his seruants began to laugh, and said that he had well done. Wherefore men ought not to do vnto others otherwise then they would should be done vnto themselves.

Here end the fables of Alfoncc,

The

Here followeth the Fables of *Poge the Florentine.*

The first Fable, is of the subtilty of a woman for to deceive her Husband.

THE falshood of women is marvellous, as it appeareth by this fable, of a merchant that was newly wedded unto a faire young woman, which Merchant went ouer the Sea to buy and sell, and for to get maintenance whereby to live honestly : and because that he stayed very long, his wife supposed that he was dead, and therefore she enamoured her selfe of another man that did use her company, and did her much good : for he caused her house to be new built, which had great need of reparation; and much goods also he brought into the same. And a long time after the departing of the said Merchant, he came again to his house, which he saw builded, and saw diuers dishes, pottes, paniers, and such other household stuffe, wherefore he asked of his wife, how she had found the mean to haue repaired so soundly his house : And she answered that it was by the grace of God. And he said, Blessed be God for it. And when he was within the Chamber, he saw the bedde very richly couered, and the walls well hanged, and demanded of his wife as he had done before, and she answered as before. For which he thanked God as he had done before. And as he was set at dinner, there was brought before him unto his wife, a child of three years of age, or thereabout, whereof he demanded of his wife to whom this young child belonged : and she said, God of his goodness hath sent it me. Then said the Merchant to his wife in this manner, I remember

der no thanks to God for this, for he hath taken too much paine vpon my work, and I will not that in any wise he meddle any more therewith, for such things be long only to me, and not to him.

The second Fable is of the Woman, and
the hypocrite.

The generation or birth of the hypocrite is damnable and euill, As it appeareth by this fable, which Poge rehearseth vnto vs, which saith: that sometime he found himselfe in a good fellowship, where he heard a fable rehearsed, the tenor whereof followeth, and the said Poge said, That of all the goods of the world the hypocrites be possessors. For howbeit that an hypocrite hath sometime ability to help a poore man, yet he hath this commodity in him, that he had rather see a man lye at point of death, then saue his life with a halfe-penny; and his presumption is called hypocrisie, as ye shall heare by the fable following, the which saith: that sometime the custome of all the poore was, that they went before folkes doores without saying any word. It hapned at that time that a poore man, honest and of good life, went to get his living from one doore to another: and vpon a day among other, he went and set himselfe vpon a great stone before the doore of a Widow, which widow was accustomed euer to giue somewhat. And when the good woman knew that he was at the doore, she brought to him his portion as she was accustomed; and as she gaue to him the meat, she looked on him, and seeing him so faire and well made of body, she then filled with carnall concupiscence, and burning in the fire of loue, required and instantly prayed him, that he would returne thither within three dayes, and promised to him that she would giue him a right good dinner: and the poore man said vnto her that he would: And when he came againe, he set himselfe before the doore of the Widowes house,
and

and the Woman well knew when he should come, wherefore she came to the gate and said, Come in good man, for we shall dine together : whereto the poore man assented, and entred into the house, and the Widow gaue to him good meat and good drink. And when they had well dined, the said widow praised the good man greatly, and after she kissed him, requiring him that she might haue the copp of his lone : and then the poore man all ashamed, knowing her thought and will, answered thus to her ; Certainly my good mistresse I dare not, but neuerthelesse, I would faine do it. And the Widow all inflamed with lone, prayed him more and more. And when the poore man saw that he might not excuse himselfe, he said to the Widow in this manner : My friend, sith thou desirest me to do so great an euill, I take God to my witness that thou art causer of it : for I am not consenting to the deed : but saying these words, he yelded to her will.

Fable iii, of the young woman which accused her husband of defect.

Poge the Florentine saith, that sometime there was a man named Nerus Depacis, which of his age was among the Florentines right sage and wise. This Nerus had a faire daughter the which he married to a faire young man and a rich, and of a good parentage : the which young man, the next day after the feast of the wedding, did leade her into his Castle, a little way without the city of Florence. And within few dayes after, this young man brought his wife againe to Florence, vnto the house of her father Nerus : who made a feast, as it was accustomed to do all that time, in some place, eight dayes after the wedding. When the new married woman was come again to her fathers house, she made not ouer good cheere, but euer she looked downe

downeward to the earth, all sad and melancholious. And when her mother saw her daughter so sorrowfull, and of mourning countenance, she called her into a Chamber, whereas no body was but they two, and asked of her the cause of her sorrow, saying: How fare ye my daughter? What want ye, haue ye not all things comming to you after your desire? therfore take ye such heauynesse? Then the Daughter weeping said vnto her mother, Alas, my Mother, We haue not marryed me to a man, for of such a thing as a man ought to haue, he hath neuer a deale, sauing a little part of the thing for which wedding is made. And then the Mother right sorrowfull and wroth of this euill fortune, went to her husband Nerus, and told him the euill hap of her daughter, whereof he was greatly wroth, and sore troubled. And loone after this fortune was told among all the linage of Nerus; whereof they were all sorrowfull, to heare that so faire and comely a young man, endued with so many good gifts and graces, besides riches and renown, was faulty of the thing for which marriage is made. Neuerthelesse the tables were set and couered, and when time of dinner came, the young man came into the house of Nerus, with diuers of his friends and his parents, and incontinent they set them all downe at the table, some with heauy and sorrowfull hearts, and some with merry minds and joyfull countenances. And when the young man saw, that his friends made good chere, and that all the friends of his wife were heauy and sad, he prayed and besought them, that they would tell him the cause of their heauynesse and sorrow, but none of them all would answer him. Neuertheles he besought them again; and then one of them full of sorrow, and made forward in speech then any of the rest, said, Certaily my faire sonne, thy Wife hath told vs that thou art no perfect man. At these words the young man began to laugh, and said with an high voice, that all that were

were there might vnderstand him, My parents and my friends, make good cheere, for the cause of your sorow shall soon be appeased: and then he being clothed with a short gowne, untied his hosen, and took his member out with his hand, which was great and very sufficient; and laid the same vpon the table, so that all the company there present might see it. Wherefore all the fellowship were very ioyfull and glad, many of the men wishing themselves the like, and diuers of the women desiring that their husbands had such an instrument. And then some of the friends and Parents of Nerus daughter, went to her and said, that she had done great wrong to complain of her Husband, for he had wherewith the might be well contented, and blamed her great folly. To whom she answered in this manner, saying, My friends, why blame you me? I complaine not without a cause: For our Ass which is a brute Beast, hath a member as great as mine arme, and my Husband which is a man, his member is scarce halfe so great: wherfore the simple and young damsell weend, that men should haue their members as great or greater then Asses. Wherfore it is oft said, that much lacketh he of that that a foole thinketh or weeneth.

The fourth Fable is of Hunting and
Hawking.

Poge a Florentine rehearseth vnto vs, how once he was in fellowship were men spake of the superfinerie of them which gouern the Doggs and Hawkes: Whereof a Millanois named Paulus began to laugh, and required of Poge that he would rehearse some fable of the said Hawkes, and for loue of the fellowship he said in this manner. Sometime there was a Physician which was a Millanois. This Physician healed fooles of all manner of folly, and in what manner he healed

healed them I shall tell you. This Leech had within his house a great garden, and in the midst of it was a great and deep pit, which was full of stinking water, and within the said pit the Physician put the fooles after the quantity of their foolishnes, some vnto the knee, and others vnto the belly, and there he bound them to a post, but none he put deeper then vnto the stomacke, for doubt of further inconvenience. It hapned then that among others, one was brought to him, which he put into the said water up to the thighes. When he had been the space of fteene dayes within the said water, he began to be peaceable and had his wit again. And that he might take some dispost and consolation, he required his keeper that he might walke about the Garden, promising not to depart thereout. The keeper that kept him, vnbound him from the stake, and had him out of the water. And when he had been many dayes out of the pit, he went neere vnto the gate of the Garden, but durst not go out, least he should be put againe within the said pit. Upon a time he went vnto the gate, and as he looked all about he saw a fair young man on horsebacke, that bare a Sparhawke on his fist, and had with him a couple of fair Spaniels; whereat the foole was all abashed, and because of nouelty, he called to the said young man, saying. My friend, I pray thee thou wilt tell me what that is thou art vpon. And the young man said, it is a horse, which doth profit me to chace and beare me where I please. Then he asked of him, What is that thou bearest on thy fist, and whereto is it good? and the young man answered him, It is a Sparhawke which is good to take Patriches and Quailles. Yet againe the foole demanded of him, My friend, what are those that do follow thee, and wherfore are they good? Then the young man answered him, they be Dogs, and are good to searce and find Patriches and Quailles, and when they haue raised them, my Sparhawke takes them, wherof proceed-

eth unto me great joy and pleasure. And the foole deminded againe : what profit shall all that they take in the whole yeere bring thee ? And the young man said unto him, foure or fite crownes, or thereabouts. What no more, said the foole ? And how much shall they dispend thee in a year ? And the young man answered, fiftie or fifty crownes. And when the foole heard these words, he said again to the young man, O my friend, I pray thee that soone thou wilt depart from hence; for if our Physician come he shall put thee into the same pit because thou art a foole : I was put in by to the thighs, but he will surely put thee therein by to the chinne : for thou dost commit the greatest folly that ever I heard spoken of.

And therefore the study of hunting and haloking is a stouthfull cure, and none ought to do it without he were very rich, and a man of liuelihood, and yet it ought not to be done often; but sometime for to take disport, and to drive away melancholy.

The v. Fable is of the recitation of some Monsters.

Poge of Florence reciteth how in his time one named Hugh, Prince of the Medices, saw a Cat that had two heads, and his legges before and behind were double, as they had been ioined together. Also about the marches of Italy, within a meddow was sometime a Cow, which brought forth a Serpent of marvellous greatnesse, right hideous and fearefull; for first, he had the head greater then the head of a Calfe. Secondly, he had a neck of the length of an Asse, and his Body made after the likenesse of Dogge, and his taile was wondrous thicke and long without comparison. And when the Cow saw that she had made such a birth, and that within her belly she had borne so humble a beast, she was very fearefull, and lifted her selfe up, and supposed to haue fled away; but the Serpent with his long taile enlaced her two hinder legges,

and when the Serpent beganne to sucke the Cowe, and sucked so long till that he found some milke. And as soon as the Cowe could escape from him, he fled vnto the other hinde, but incontinent her paps, and her hinder legs, and all that the serpent touched, was all black a great time after. And soon after, the said Cowe made a faire Calfe, the which maruaile was shewyed to the said Poge, he being at Ferrara. And yet again soon after that there was found in a river a monster mariner of the Sea, of the forme or likenesse as followeth. First, he had from the navel upward the likenesse of a man, and from the navel downward, like the forme or making of a fish, the which part was gemine, that is to say, double. Secondly, he had a great head, and he had great hornes about his eares. Also he had great paps, and a wonderfull great and horrible mouth, and his hands reached into his entrails or bowels, and at both his elbows he had wings right broad and great of fishes manner, therewith he swimmied, and only he had but the head out of the water. It hapned then, that as many women washed clothes at the said river, that this horrible and dreadfull Beast for default of meat came swimming toward the said women. Of the which he tooke one by the hand, and supposed to haue drabone her into the water; but she was strong and well aduised, and resisted the said monster, and as she defended her selfe, she began to cry with a high voice, Help, helpe, whereupon this women came vnto her, and by hurling of stones they slew the said monster. Also Poge saith, that being at Ferrara, he saw the said monster, and said that diuers young children were accustomed for to wash and bathe themselves in the said river, but they came not all home againe, wherefore the women washed their clothes no more at the said Port: for the folke supposed that the Monster killed and deuoured the young children which were drowned. Also, within a little while after

after it befell out about the marches of Italy, that there was a child borne which had two heads, and two faces, beholding one another, and the armes of each other embraced the body, the which body from the navell upward was joined, save the two heads, and from the navell downward, the limbs were all separated one from another, in such wise, that the joints of generation were shewed manifestly. Of the which child, rydings came vnto the person of Page at Rome.

Fable vi, of the Parson, the Dogge, and
the Bishop.

Fluer causeth all things to be done, vnto the battell-
ing againe of a place, which is prophane or interdict.
As ye shall heare by this present fable, of a Priest
dwelling in the country, which sometime had a Dog
which he loued well, the which Priest was very rich.
This Dogge by processe of time died, and when he
was dead, he buried him in the church-yard, because
of the great loue wherewith he loued him. It hapned
so, that the Bishop knew thereof by the aduisement
of some other, wherefore he sent for the said Priest, and
supposed to haue of him a great summe of gold, or else
he would make him to be severely punished, and he
wrote a letter to the said Priest, of which the tenor con-
tained only, that he should come and speake with him.
And when the Priest had read the letter, he understood
well all the cause, and thought in himself that he would
haue of him some fluer, for he knew well enough the
condition of the Bishop: and forthwith he made his
vestment and a hundred crownes worth him, and went
for to speake with his Prelate, and when he came be-
fore him, the Prelate began to shew him the end of
his misdeede: and the Priest answered, Right re-
uerend Father, if ye knew the manner wherewith
wherewith the said Dogge was dead, ye would not
marvell

marned if he hath well deserued to be buried honestly and worshipfully among men: he was all filled with humane wit, as well in his life, as in the article of his death. And then the Bishop said, How may that be? Rehearse to me then the whole manner of his life. Then the Priest said, Certainly right reuerent Father, you ought right well to know, when he was at the article of Death, he made his testament, and the dogge knowing your need and indigence, bequeathed you a hundred crownes of Gold: the which I bring now vnto you. And the Bishop for loue of the money asloved the priest and also allowed the same sepulture. And therefore sheweth all things to be granted or done.

The vii. Fable, is of the Fox, the Cocke, and the Logges.

ALl the reward of them that mocke others, is to be mocked themselues, as appeareth by this present fable, of a Cocke which sometime saw a Fox come toward him sore hungry; which Cocke supposed that he came toward him but to eat some of his hens, for which cause the Cocke made all his Hens to fly vpon a tree. And the Fox began to cry toward the Cocke good tydings, good tydings, and after he saluted the cocke right reuerently, and demanded of him thus, O Gossp, what doest thou here so high, and the Hennes with thee? Hast thou not heard the good tydings worthy and profitable for vs? and then the Cocke full of malice answered to him, Nay verily Gossp, but I pray thee tell them vnto vs. Then said the Fox to the Cocke, Certainly, Gossp, they be the best that euer ye heard, for ye may goe and talke and commune among all beasts without any harme or damage, and they shall do to you both pleasure and all seruice to them possible. For thus it is concluded and also confirmed by

by the great counsell of Beasts; that none be so hardy, to here or let in any wise none other; be it neuer so little a beast; for the which good tydings, I pray thee that thou wilt come dolone, to the end that we may sing Te Deum laudamus for ioy. But the Cocke knowing well the fallenesse of the For, replied in this manner; Certainly my brother and good friend, thou hast brought vnto me right good tydings, whereof more then a hundred times I thanke thee: and saying these words, the Cocke lift up his neck and lookt farre from him, and the For said, What Gossip, whereabout lookest thou? And the Cocke said, Certainly my Brother, I see a couple of Dogges comming hither with open mouth, which as I suppose come for to bring vs the tydings thou hast told vs. And then the Fore shooke for feare of the Dogges, and said to the Cocke, God be with you my friend, it is time that I depart hence before the Dogges come nearer; and saying these words, he ran away as fast as he might; and then the Cocke cried after him, saying, gossip, why runnest thou thus: if the peace be accorded, thou oughtest to doubt nothing. Ha gossip, said the Fore, I doubt that these two Dogges haue not heard of the decree of the peace. And thus when a beguiler is beguiled, he receiueth the salary or payment which he ought to haue, wherefore let euery man keep himselfe therefrom.

POgius rehearseth that there were two Women in Rome which he knew of diuers age and form which came to the Curtisan for to get somewhat for their bodies, whom he receiued, and it happened that he knew the fairest of them both twice, and the other once, and so departed. Afterward when they should depart he gaue to them a peice of cloth, not telling how much each of them should haue for their part: and in parting of the said cloth, there fell between the women a strife,

because one of them demanded two parts, after the exigence of her worke, and the other the halfe, each of them shewing their reasons, the one saying that she had suffered him twice to do his pleasure, and the other pretended that she was ready, and in her was no default, and so from bratling they fell to fighting. And their husbands not knowing the cause of their strife, each of them defended his wifes cause; from the fighting of the women, it came to their husbands, with buffets and casting of stones, so long that men can be thorn them, and after the custome of Rome, both the husbands were brought to prison, bearing enmity each to other, and not knowing wherefore. The said cloth was put into the hands of women secretly, and not parted, but it was secretly argued among the women how it would be parted: and they demanded of Doctor what was the law of it. He saith also that a Merchant of Florence bought a Horse of a man, and made his consent with the seller for twenty five Ducats, for to pay forth within hand fiftene Ducats, and for the rest hee would become his debter, and the seller was content, and thereupon deliuered the horse, and receiued fiftene Ducats. And a while after, the seller demanded of the buyer the residue. And he deuiued the payment, and bade him hold his covenant, for, said the buyer, we accorded that I should be thy debter, and if I should satisfie and pay, I should no more be thy debter.

HEE telleth vs also that there was a Carrike of Iene hired into France, for to make war against the English men, the which Carrike a gentleman of France beheld and saw, and said he would be auedged on him that bare his armes: whereupon arose an alteration, insomuch that the French man prohibited the Venoes to battaile: the Venoes accepted the promotion, and came at the day assigned into the field, with
out

out any array or habilements of war, and the frenchman came well appointed into the field. And then the patron of the Carrike said, Wherefore is it that we two should fight this day and make battaile? Because, said the other, that thine armes be mine, and belonged to me before thou hadst them. Then the Georges said, It is no need to make any battaile therefore, for the armes that I bears, is not the head of an Ox, but it is the head of a Cole: which thing so spoken, the noble frenchman was abashed, and so departed halfe mocked.

Also he saith, that there was a Physitian dwelling in a City, which was a cunning man in that Science, and had a servant, a young man, that made pilles, after a certaine forme that he had leyned unto him: and when this young man had dwelled long with him, and could perfectly make the pilles, he departed from his Master, and went into a strange Country where he was not knowne, letting them understand that he was a cunning Physitian, and could giue Medicines for all kinde of diseases, and ministred alwayes his pilles to euery man that came to him for remedy. It hapned so, that a poore man of that place where hee was, came to him, and complained, how he had lost his Asse, and prayed him to giue him a Medicine to find his Asse againe; and he gaue unto him the pilles, and bade him to receiue and take them, and he should finde his Asse. And the poore man did so, and after went into the fields and pastures to looke after his Asse, and in so doing, the pills wrought so in his belly, that hee must needs go purge him, and went among the reeds, and there eased him, and there anon he found his Asse; whereof he being very ioyfull, ranne into the towne, and declared that by the Medicine that he had receiued of the Physitian, he had found his Asse. Which thing knowne, all the simple people reputed him for a very cunning

cunning man, albeit he could do nothing but make pills. And thus many folkes are oftentimes taken for wise and cunning; for he was reputed not only to heale all kinde of sicknesses, but also to giue medicines to find Asles after they were lost.

T Here was in a certaine towne a Widower that wooed a Widow, to haue her to his wife, and at the last they were agreed and sure together. And when a young woman being seruant with the said Widow heard thereof, she came to her mistresse and said to her, Alas Mistresse, what haue you done? Why said the Mistresse: I haue heard say, said the maid, That he is a perilous man, for he laid so oft, and knew so much his other wife, that she died therof, and I am sorry thereof that you should fall into the like case. To whom the Widow answered and said: Certainly I desire to dye, for here is nothing but sorrow and care in this world.

This was a curious
excuse of the
Widow.

FINIS.

Robert Anderson 1813 Jan 9

The Table of the life and pleasant Fables of *ESOP*, and so forth of *AVIAN*, *Alfonse* and *Poge* the Florentine.

How Esop excused him before his Lord for eating of the Figges. Fol. 1.

How the Goddess of Hospitality gave speech of
tongue to *Esop*, and how he was sold. 3.

How *Eso*p deceived his fellows by taking the lighter burden, which seemed to them the heaviest. 6.

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How *Exantus* brought *Ésop* home to his wife. 10.

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How *Eſop* did beare the preſent home to his Miſtreſſe. 13.

How *Eſop* made his Lady come home againe. 15.

How *Exantus* sent *Esop* to the market to buy of the best meat that he could get, and how he bought nothing but tongues. 16.

How *Esop* found one that cared for nothing, and brought him home to his Master. 18.

How *Esof* answered his Master. 20.

How *Exantus* promised to drink all the water in the Sea.

How *Eantis* excused himselfe from his promise by
the counsell of *Esof*. 22.

How *Exantus* found cause to beate *Efop*. 23.

How *Exantus* found his wife all uncovered. 24.

How *E/op* found a treasure, and how *Exantus* cau-
fed

The Table.

<p>set him to be put in prison.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p was delivered out of prison, and how <i>Exantus</i> promised unto him both liberty and free- dome.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p was restored to his liberty by the will of his Master <i>Exantus</i>.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p recited a Fable to the Samians of the Wolves that sent their Ambassadors unto the Sheepe.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p obeyed not the Samians, but went unto the King of Lindy.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p returned to Samie againe.</p> <p>How the King commanded that <i>Eso</i>p should be put to death, and how he was saved.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p was brought before the King, and how the King commanded that he should be put in his first estate and dignitie.</p> <p>How <i>Eurus</i> the son of <i>Eso</i>p departed from his Father, and killed himselfe.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p made solution to the King of Ægipt, up- on a question which he sent to the King of Baby- lon Lycurius.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p returning into Babylon, the King caused an Image of Gold to be set up in honour of him.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p was betrayed, and how he rehearsed to the Delphines, the Fable of the Ratte and the Frogge.</p> <p>How <i>Eso</i>p ended and died miserably.</p> <p>How the Delphines sacrifice to their gods, and edified a Temple for to please them for the death of <i>Eso</i>p.</p>	<p>Fol. 26.</p> <p>27.</p> <p>30.</p> <p>32.</p> <p>cod.</p> <p>33.</p> <p>34.</p> <p>36.</p> <p>38.</p> <p>39.</p> <p>42.</p> <p>43.</p> <p>44.</p> <p>The</p>
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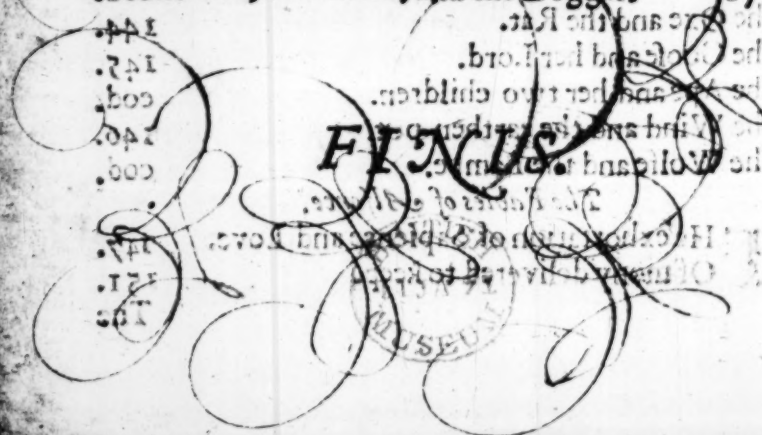
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THE FABLES OF *ESOP*, IN ENGLISH.

With all his life and fortune, how hee was
Subtill, Wise, and born in *Greece*, not far from
Troy the great, in a Towne named *Amonio*. He was
of all other men most deformed, and evill shapen : for he
had a great Head, a larg Visage, long Lawes, sharp Eyes, a short
Necke, crooke-backed, great Belly, great Legs, larg Feet. And
yet that which was worse he was dumb, and could not speake
But notwithstanding this, he had a singular wit, and was very
ingenious and subtill in cavillations, and pleasant in
words, after he came to his speech.

Whereunto are added the Fables of *Arian* : and also
the Fable of *Alphance*, with the Fables of *Poge* the
Florentine, very pleasant to be read.



L O N D O N,

Printed by *F. B.* for *Andrew Hebb*, at the signe
of the *Bell* in *St. Pauls Church-Yard*. 1647.

RECEIVED
OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE
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WASHINGTON, D. C.
JAN 10 1900

The first of these is the fact that the
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 third of these is the fact that the
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This Hiſtorie maketh mention how Eſop excuſed him ſelfe before his Lord, for eating of the Figs.

AND for as much as his Lord to whom Eſop was bound, ſuppoſed ſ he was not profitable, he ſent him to labour in the fields, and to dig and delve in the earth. And on a day as his lord walked in the fields, one of his labourers gathered figs, and preſented them unto him, ſaying, My Lord, take theſe figs as for the firſt fruits of thy field. And the Lord receiv'd them joyfully, and delivered them to his ſervant Agapots, charging him to keep them untill he returned from his baine. And it hapned, that Eſop coming from his labour, demanded dinner, like as he was accuſtomed; & Agapots which kept the figs ate of them, and ſaid to one of his fellows, If I did not doubt and feare my maſter, I would eat all theſe figs. And his fellow ſaid, if thou wilt let me eat with thee, I ſhall find a craft that we ſhall have neither blame ne harme therefore. How may that be ſaid Agapots? To whom his fellow ſaid when my Lord ſhall come home, we will ſay to him, that Eſop hath eaten them. And becauſe he cannot ſpeake, he ſhall not excuſe himſelfe, and therefore he ſhall be wel beaten. And here upon they went and ate the figs between them both, ſaying, this villaine ſhall be well beaten. And when their lord came home he commanded Agapots to bring him the figs; and Agapots ſaid unto him, Sir, when Eſop came from his labour from the field, he found the cellar open, and went in without reaſon, and hath eat all the figs. And when the Lord heard this, he was much angry, and ſaid: call to me Eſop, to whom he ſaid, thou counterfeit churle, how is this hapned, that thou haſt not been afraid to eat my figs? whereof Eſop was afraid and beheld them that had accuſed him. And the Lord commanded to take off his cloths and let him be beaten, but he kneeled downe at the Lords feet, and by ſignes

for to rest and sleepe under a tree. And then the Goddess of Hospitality appeared unto him, and gave him Sapience and Abilitie, also she gave to him the gift of speech, for to speake diuers fables & inventions, as to him which was right skilful to hospitality. And after when Esop was awakend, he began to say to himselfe, I haue not onely slept but sweetly rested, but also I haue had a faire dreame, and without any impeachment I speake, and all that I see I call by their proper names; as an horse, an oxe, a chariot, and to all other things, I can giue to every one his name. For I haue receiued suddenly the grace of this knowledge, for the great pity that I haue had on them which lacked hospitality; for he that doth well, ought to haue good hope in God, that he shall haue good reward therefore, and therefore I shall not labour less than I did before. And thus when Esop began to labour, there came he that had the charge of the field, & the next night, & when he began to beat one of the labourers grievously, whereat Esop was greatly displeased, & said to him in this manner: why beatest thou him for nought, and euen so dost thou comdest and beatest vs without any cause: thou killest us & dost nought thy selfe. But I shall tell to my Lord all this matter like as thou shalt well knowe of it. And when the Procurator heard him called by his own name Zenas, he marvelled that Esop spake and thought in himselfe, I shall go before my Lord to the end that this foule villaine complaine not of me, & that my Lord put not me from my place. And he took his mule, and rode vnto the City, and came to his Lord, and said, My Lord, I humbly salute you. And the Lord looked on him & said, why comest thou so afraid and trembled? And Zenas said vnto him, that now in the field is happened a thing monstrous. What is that said the Lord, haue the trees brought forth their fruit before their time, or haue the beasts brought forth their fruit against nature? And Zenas answered him: nay my Lord, but the

crooked churle, the counterfeited Esop, beginneth to speak clearly. Truly said his Lord, this indeed is a thing y to me seemeth monstrous: yea forsooth, said Zenas, then said the Lord, we see daily many men when they be angry cannot speak, but when they be in peace, can well speak, and proffer things. And when Zenas said, my Lord, he can speak aboue all other, and hath said to me things contumelious, blasphemous, and villanous, of thee and all thy goods. Whereat his Lord was very angry, and said, Goe thou to the field, and what wilt thou do with him, do it, sell him, or give him, or lose him, for I giue him to thee. And then Zenas took his gift by writing, and came again into the field, and said to Esop, now thou art mine, and in my power; for my Lord hath giuen thee to me, and because thou art a villaine and an evil churle, I shall sell thee utterly. And then it fortuned that a Merchant that had bought seruants, came into y field to buy beasts, for to bear ouer his merchandize to Ephesus, the which met with Zenas, and saluted him, and demanded of him if he had any beasts to sell. And Zenas answered, that for nothing he should find no beasts to sell, but I haue a seruant which is not faire, and he is of a good age, which if thou wilt thou shalt buy. And the Merchant said, he would first see him. And then Zenas called Esop & shewed him to the Merchant. And when the Merchant saw him so foule and deformed, he said in this manner: From whence is this villaine come, and this trumpet of Tragedie? this is a faire merchandize, for if he had not a voice, I should take him for a bottle of wind: ye be well occupied to bring me hither to shew me this faire personage. I supposed thou wouldest haue sold to me a comely seruant, honest and pleasant. And then the Merchant returned on his way, and Esop followed him, saying in this manner. Abide a little here; & the Merchant said hunder me not villaine, for thou maiest haue no profit of me: for if I bought thee, I should be called the Merchant of

offooles, and of vaine things. And then Esop said vnto him, Wherefore art thou then come hither: and the Merchant answered him, to buy some thing that is faire and comely, but thou art foule, deformed, lothsome, and counterfitted: Wherefore I meane to haue no whit at al to do with such merchandize. And then Esop said, if thou wilt buy me, thou shalt leese nothing. And the Merchant demanded wherein maiest thou do me any profit: Then Esop said: Be there not in thy house little children, ne in the towne that cry and run: buy me and thou shalt do wisely, and shalt be their Master, for they shall dread and feare me like a false visage. And then the Merchant smiled at the words of Esop, and returned back to Zenas, asking him how he would sell that faire merchandize. Zenas said vnto him, giue me thirty pound or thre half pence for him: for I know well that no man will buy him; and then the Merchant paid for him as much as he was wel content with, and Esop went with his Master into his countrey. And as he entred into y^e house he saw the children lying in the lap of their mother, then said Esop to the Merchant, Now shalt thou haue experience of that I haue promised, for since these little children haue seene me, they haue been still and afraid. And then the Merchant laughing, bade him to enter, and he seeing his fellows faire & pleasant, saluted them saying, I salute you my faire fellows. Now when they saw Esop they said al, we shall haue anon a faire personage; what will our Master do to buy such a man, so foule and so deformed: And their Lord answered, because that I haue found no beasts to help you, therefore I haue bought this gallant, to help you to beare your carriage, wherefore part among you y^e sardles for to beare. And Esop said to them, O my good fellows, ye see well that I am the least and feeblest, I pray you therefore to giue me the lightest burthen: and his fellows said to him, because thou maiest haue nothing: To whom Esop said, because ye do all the labour

at a reasonable price, there is a Philoſopher named Exantus, to whom much people go to learn at a place called Sombon. And the ſervants thither & the Philoſopher ſold buy them, and the merchant did ſell at a ſmall Garment, and ſaltis with new robes, and ſell them thence for to ſell: but becauſe Eſop was ſo ſimple and ſo ſimple, he ſold him in ſervants, & ſold ſet between the other ſlaves which were ſold, pleaſant, and well ſeconded me; but all they that beheld Eſop were amazed becauſe of his ſervant, ſaying: From whence cometh this fellow? And becauſe they ſo wondered at him, he ſold all ſervants ſervants in their ſervants.

Of the ſecond ſale of Eſop.

As ſoon as the market day came, Exantus the Philoſopher departed out of his houſe, and went to ſell through the market, and he ſaw theſe two young men, and Eſop ſtanding between them, whereat he marvelled much, for what cauſe the merchant had ſo ſold them, and approaching to one of them, he ſaid in this manner, Of what country art thou? And he answered, I am of Cappadocia. And Exantus demanded of him, ſaying: What cauſe ſoldſt thou? And he answered, I ſell my things that thou ſold: which answer when Eſop heard, he laughed, ſhewing his great teeth, and all the ſervants that were there ſaw Exantus beholding Eſop ſo long laughing, ſhewing his great teeth, they thought they ſaw a monster and not a man, and ſaid to their fellows, his great mouth and very big teeth, And ſome ſaid, what they had ſeen, and they ſaid, that he ſore laughed, and ſhewed them his teeth, and ſome ſaid he laughed not, but that he had a toad on his teeth: and one of them ſeemed wherefore he laughed, calling him a fool: and he ſaid to the ſervants that to do there with him: and the ſervant departed, and the ſervant departed, and then Exantus demanded the price of ſaltis: & the merchant ſaid he ſhould

should pay for him a thousand pence : & Exantus esteeming
 the price ouer deare returned to the other fellow &
 said to him, Of whence art thou? And he said of Lido; &
 Exantus asked of him, what canst thou do : And he said,
 I can do all things that thou wænest : and when Esop
 heard these words, he laughed more then he did before;
 And when the scholars saw him laugh again, they said:
 this fellow laugheth at all things. Then Exantus de-
 manded the price of Garmaticus, and the Merchant said
 three hundred crowns, which Exantus thought too dear, & went
 his way. Then the scholars said to their Master, These
 seruants please thee not : yes, said Exantus : they please
 me well, but it is ordained in our City, that no seruant
 should be bought at so high a price, vpon a great paine.
 And one of the scholars said: seeing they that he saire can
 not be bought, buy him that is foule and deformed, tru-
 ly he shal do thee some service, & the price he shall be sold
 for, we our selues will pay. And Exantus said to them, If
 I should buy this villain & is so foule & vnclean, my wife
 would not be well pleased, for she is so curious, that she
 may not suffer her self to be serued of such a counterfeit-
 ed seruant. And then the scholars said, Master thou dost
 many things, with which thy wife shall not gain say nor
 meddle. Then Exantus said to them, let vs then demand
 of him what he can do, lest for default of asking we should
 lose our money. Then Exantus turned him to Esop & said,
 God save thee young man : and Esop said to him in this
 manner, I pray thee grieue me not. Then Exantus said
 to Esop, I salute you. So do I thee, said Esop. Well, leave
 these mocks, said Exantus, & answer me that I shall de-
 mand : and he asked what art thou? and Esop answered,
 I am of flesh & bone. Then Exantus said, I demand not
 that, but where wast thou born? and Esop answered, In
 the womb of my mother: and Exantus said, yet I ask not
 that of thee, but I ask in what place thou wert born: and
 Esop said, my mother neuer told nor assured me, whether
 she

He was deliuered of me in the chamber or in the hall.
 Then Exantus said, I pray thee tell me what thou canst
 do: Esop said, nothing. Exantus said: What canst thou do
 nothing: Esop said no. Wherefore, said Exantus? Be-
 cause said Esop, my fellows say they can do all things,
 and then will they leaue nothing for me to do. Then the
 scholars were much abashed, and had great maruell at
 him, saying: This fellow answereth by diuine wisdom,
 for there is none to be found that can do all things, and
 therefore he laughed. Then Exantus said, I pray thee tel
 me if thou wilt that I shall buy thee: & Esop said, That
 is in thee, no man shall constrain thee thereto: neuerthe-
 lesse, if thou wilt buy me, open thy purse, & tell the mony,
 and make the bargain. Then the scholars swore by all
 the gods, this fellow exceedeth our Master. Then Exan-
 tus said to him in this manner, If I buy thee, wilt thou
 not run away: then Esop answered, If thou thinke that
 I will run away, I counsell thee not to buy me. Surely,
 said Exantus, thou sayest well, but thou art very lothsome
 and deformed. To whom Esop said, Men ought not only
 to behold the face of a man, but rather to regard his courage.
 Then Exantus demanded of the Merchant, what shall I
 pay for this Esop? And the merchant said to him, thou art
 a foolish merchant to leaue these faire & goodly seruants,
 and to take him that can do nothing, take one of these
 two and let this Asse go: and Exantus said, I require thee
 to tell me what I shall pay. Then the Merchant said
 thre score pence. Then the Scholars told out the mony
 to the Merchant, and thus by this bargain, Esop became
 seruant vnto Exantus. And when the banquers receiued
 the mony for the sale of Esop, they demanded curiously
 who were the buyer and seller. Then Exantus and the
 Merchant compounded and accorded betwixen them,
 that he had not been sold for so much mony. But Esop
 said to the Banquers, this is he that hath bought mee,
 and this is he that hath sold mee, which thing they
 will

will buy, therefore I asseme and say, that I am free. When the Banquers laughed at his emulation, and went and received the price of Exantus, for as much as he had bought Elop.

How Exantus brought Elop home to his Wife.

Then Exantus departed, Elop followed Exantus home to his house, and when he came before his house, he said to Elop, abide here a while, before the gate, and I go in first to praise thee to my lady, & mistress my wife. Well sir, say Elop: & then Exantus entered into his house, and said to his wife, My wife, ye shall not imagine that I have come to be at debate with me, for ye have better me long to get you a faire servant, whereofas now I have bought one that is so true, & so perfect that none never knewe one better. And when those of the ladies servants heard him say so, knowing & it had bin truth, they began to strike together, and the one began to say to the other, My Lord hath bought for me a faire husband: & the other said: This might have I dreamed that I was married: and thus his servants talked. But his wife said my Lord where is the faire fellow that ye praise so much: I pray you let me see him: and Exantus said, he is before the gate. And his wife said, I pray you bring him in: and as the two young women had debate for him, one of them thought in her self, I shall see him first, and if I may he shall be my husband, and so she issued out of the house, and said: Where is this faire young man that I desire to see, and Elop said to her, what demandest thou: I am he. And when she saw Elop, she was abashed, and said unto him, Art thou the faire Peacock: where is thy taile: And Elop said to her again, If thou have need of a taile, thou shalt not faile of one. And then as he would have gone in, the servant said unto him, Come not here: for all that thou sayest will run away. And after she went in, & told her fellows what he was: and when she came out, and saw him so deformed, she said beware thou knowest that thou

thou touch me not: when Elop entred into y^e house, anon
 he was presented to the Lady: when the Lady saw him,
 anon she turned to Brantus and said: and instead of a
 servant thou hast bought a monster, throw him out: and
 Brantus said to her, My wife thou oughtest to be glad &
 to fall, because I haue brought to thee so fast & so good a
 servant: and she said to Brantus, now wilt thou well that
 thou louest me not, for thou desirest to haue another
 wife, and because thou wilt not tell it me, thou hast
 bought me this little great manie, to the intent that I
 go from thee: I will no longer abide, for thou knowest
 well that I may not suffer him, and therefore desire
 me my money, and I shall go my way. And then Bran-
 tus said to Elop, when we were on the way thou spakest
 largely, and now thou sayest nothing: and Elop said to
 him, because thy wife is so malicious I put her in prison.
 Brantus said, hold thy peace, else shalt thou be beaten,
 lest thou not that I loue her more than my selfe: then
 said Elop, I pray thee that thou loue her well: and she
 said, wherefore not? When Elop smot his foot on y^e pave-
 ment, and cryed out with a loud voice, saying: Wark,
 this Philosopher Brantus is overcome of a woman: and
 then Elop turned him to his Lady & said to her, O woman
 I pray you take not my words at the worst. When
 thou wilt haue a servant that were young, well favoured,
 well apparelled, strong and rich, to serue thee at the dinner,
 and bear thee to the bed, that can rib and rib to thy feet,
 and not such a foule man and so deformed a servant as
 I am: for if thou hadst such a one, thou wouldest set
 might by thy husband, and therefore Brutus the Philo-
 sopher had his mouth of God, which neuer spied. He
 said that there were many perils and tommelys on the
 Sea, with other great riuers, & also poverty is a hard
 thing, & difficult to be borne: also there be many other
 great dangers & troubles in this world: but there is no worse
 danger nor perill than a false woman. And therefore
 I pray you & you take no more a false servant
 nor

not pleasant to serue thee, lest thereby thou dishonor thy
 Lord & husband. Then she said to Esop, auoid hence thou
 villain, which art not only deformed of thy body, but al-
 so of thy words. But I shall go my way. Then said Exan-
 tus to Esop, Thou seest how thou hast angred my Wife,
 see thou please her; and Esop said, it is no small thing
 to please the ire of a woman, but a great thing. Exan-
 tus said to Esop, speake no more, for I haue bought thee
 to make peace, and not to make debate and strife.

How Exantus brought Esop, into a Garden.

EXANTUS bade Esop take a panner, and follow him into
 the Garden. And Exantus said to the Gardiner, Give
 vs of thy herbs: and the gardiner cut off the herbs in
 diuers places, and deliuered them to Esop, and he tooke
 them, and Exantus paid for them: and when he was de-
 parting the gardiner said to him, Master, I pray thee that
 thou wilt aske me a question: Well, said Exantus, aske
 what thou wilt, and the Gardiner demanded of him, say-
 ing; Master, what is the cause that the herbs that be
 not labored, grow faster & sooner then they that be curi-
 ously laboured? This question answered Exantus, that
 they came by some providence by which the things were
 brought forth. When Esop heard this answer he began to
 laugh. And Exantus said to him; Thou villaine, laughest
 thou me to scorn: and Esop said, I mock thee not, but him
 that hath learn'd thee thy Philosophy; what solution
 hast thou made? What is that that cometh of Di-
 vine Providence? A child of a hutchin will make as good
 an answer. Exantus then said to Esop, make thou then a
 better solution. Esop said unto him, If thou command me
 I shall glayve. Exantus said unto him; I command thee
 not to say that in such things of difficultie, to make rude
 things & rustieall, but I have a seruant here which shall
 inform and give the solution of thy question, if thou wilt
 request him. And the Gardiner replied, Can this vil-
 laine palliard that is so greatly deformed, answer to
 this

this question: Then the Carver said to Esop, hast thou knowledge of such things? And Esop said, Yea truly, more then all the men in the world. For thou requirest wherefore the herbs that be not labour'd, grow sooner than they that be sown & labour'd: Esop replied, Take heed to my answer: for as a woman that hath bin a widow, and hath had children by her first husband that is dead, and after was married to another man which hath had children of another Wife before: and unto the children of her first husband she is a mother, and to the other children she is but a step-mother. Thus there is a difference between her own children, & that other womans, for her children she hath nourished pearly, and the other in anger and wrath. In this manner it is of the earth, she is mother of the herbs that grow without labour, and is but step-mother to the herbs that grow by labour and force. Said the Carver then, thou hast eased me of much study; therefore I pray thee take of the herbs that be in my Garden at all times, and when you list.

How Esop did beare the Present.

On a time, when the scholars had been in the audience with Exantus, one of the scholars dress precious meats for the supper of Exantus and others: and when they were at supper Exantus took of the best meats, and put them in a platter, and said to Esop, Go bear this to her that loves me best; And Esop thought in himself, now is it time to avenge me best on my Mistress. And when he came home into the Hall, he said to his Mistress, Madame, beware & ye eat not of this meat. And his Lady said, I am well assured that you art a great fool. Esop said to her, Exantus hath not commanded me to give it to thee, but to her that loveth him best.

Then Esop presented a platter to a little hound, which was allowed in the house, saying to her: My Lord hath sent thee this precious meat: Then the wife of Exantus went